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LOVE'S BITTERNESS.

BY EMMA M. CASS.

You sang a song last night, my sweet—
Your voice was like a singing bird's;
A score of lovers at your feet,
Drank in the honey of your words.

The night was full of merriment—
The viols clashed, the wild drums beat—
Your voice did follow where I went;
The smiles you scattered, heavenly sweet.

For me—fond fool! I stood afar;
I, who would brave for you so much—
Whose love is steady as yon star—
Your garment's hem I dared not touch!

I watched the hackneyed game go on,
A fierce pain at my dastard heart,
But who had lost or who had won,
I knew not, sitting there apart.

However it be, good-bye, good-bye,
To music, mirth and merriment;
Oh, coward heart! give one last sigh—
Love's bitterness must then content!

JESSIE DALE,

The Conductor's Daughter;

OR,

The Plot Against the Pennsylvania Railroad.

BY BURR THORNBURY, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF "ST. LEGER'S LOVE," "RAVENSWOOD," "SKALE, THE SCOUT," "AGNES AYRE," ETC.

THE PLOT TO GET RID OF CONDUCTOR DALE.

"HE IS TO TAKE THE OWL LINE SOON, I UNDERSTAND," SAID MARBURY. "SOME CHANGES ARE TO BE MADE; AND THEN AN ACCIDENT IS TO COME OFF, ACCORDING TO ARRANGEMENT, AND HE IS TO SUFFER FOR IT."

CHAPTER IV.

THE LADY'S STORY.

"Oh, I am so glad you got away from the wicked man!" cried Jessie, her sweet face all aglow with delight. "How did it happen?"

"Yes; how did it happen?" repeated her father.

Jessie had taken the lady's bonnet and wrappings and drawn a soft-cushioned chair up to the grate for her, motioning her to seat herself in it.

She did so, sinking into it as if almost exhausted.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Rowland," said Mr. Dale; "we forget your condition; you are very tired, and have probably eaten no supper. Jessie, some refreshments, please."

"Do not trouble yourselves further," interposed the lady. "*This* is enough—this blessed safety, this quiet, your welcoming kindness. Oh, I am so grateful."

Jessie did not listen to these words, but flew like a bird to do as her father had suggested.

Mr. Dale had by this time regained his outward composure, though an intense and foreboding anxiety filled his mind.

Stowell Dale had a secret in his life—a dead secret, as he thought—but this lady's coming threatened to revive it.

Jessie returned with some dainty refreshments, of which Mrs. Rowland was tempted to partake.

"I had the coffee prepared for father—he sometimes takes a cup when he comes in late at nights," said Jessie, as if she knew that the lady was wondering in her mind how the beverage could have been prepared so soon.

After Mrs. Rowland had eaten one of the foamy biscuits and drank a cup of the coffee, declining anything more, she said:

"Now if you will listen I will relate my sad and almost shameful story."

"We are ready," said father and daughter, sympathetically.

"First as to how I escaped from the pretended detective," she began, with a shudder. "I knew he was a false, bad man—an agent of even worse than he—and I knew that it was not to any station-house or prison that he intended to take me. So I pleaded for some respectable member of the police force to accompany me, and one did offer; but as we went along the street, I discovered that my enemy was attempting to bribe him to leave us, and permit me to be taken alone. The man was at first reluctant to yield, but a large sum of money was offered him in hand, and then his tempter triumphed. But as they paused, the one to give and the other to receive the money, I broke from them and fled up a dark street, I knew not whither. But I eluded them both, and at last emerged into a wider thoroughfare. I was lost—think of my condition!—but I had escaped from my enemy and I felt free and grateful. I remembered the name of the street on which you live, my kind friends and protectors, and your own names, but I was utterly bewildered and knew not which way to turn. At last it occurred to me to look into a directory for your number, and then ask some police-officer to conduct me to you. I entered a drug store, where I found a directory, and your name, Mr. Dale, in it; and I next appealed to the proprietor of the store to procure me respectable escort hither, which he kindly did, for he saw my distressed condition and did not doubt, I trust, that I was deserving."

She paused, her pure, pale face turned to her listeners with a grateful and yet beseeching expression, as if to say—"you too are kind and charitable, but will you believe all I have to tell?"

"It was terrible for such as you, Mrs. Rowland," spoke Mr. Dale, "to be subjected to this trial."

"But it is all over now," said Jessie, "and you must not even think of it, if you can help it."

"Will you hear me further now?" she asked.

"If you please," said Mr. Dale; and again the strange, foreboding look was in his face.

"My opening statement," she began, "must be a humiliating one, for my reputed father was a gambler—the proprietor at one time of a brilliant establishment in New York—and later concerned in other iniquitous occupations. I have all my life been accustomed to wealth and splendor—but, alas! wealth won by dishonest means, and splendor which was but the gilding of falsehood and crime. I have had no sympathy with these things, but have longed, oh, so earnestly and so constantly, for something not to be found amid my usual associations. There everything seemed—and was—so false, meretricious and soulless."

"I understand you," spoke Stowell Dale, feelingly.

"And I," chimed in Jessie; "your father wasn't as good as mine. There wasn't enough *love* in your life."

Poor Mrs. Rowland looked deeply pained.

"Hush, Jessie," "you wound her," whispered Mr. Dale.

"No, no," said the lady, who had caught the words; "it is as she says, though—but let me begin where I left off. My earliest recollections are of my little sister Jessie—your own daughter's name, sir."

"Yes," gasped Mr. Dale.

"Jessie Day was her name—mine Beatrice; making happy, it is said to mean—but she was with me but a short while, in fact I never *knew* her—it is only as in a dream that I think of her. It is her *picture* that I knew. She came to us—"

"And then you lost her?" questioned Mr. Dale, excitedly.

"Yes, sir, but not by death."

"Not by death?"

"She disappeared while I was absent for a time from one of the places we called home. When I returned, my reputed father told me that our nurse in going with her to a neighboring city—we were constantly changing about—had met with a railroad accident—"

"A railroad accident!" exclaimed Mr. Dale, more excited than before.

"Yes, sir; and that she was killed. But I never believed it; they told such strange stories. I was only a child, to be sure—a very young child—yet from that period I seem to remember the events and incidents of my early childhood very distinctly. You are greatly interested in my story, Mr. Dale."

"Very much indeed, Mrs. Rowland. Of what age was your sister at the time you were thus separated from her?"

"Only two years; a tiny, toddling thing, so sweet and lovable, they said."

"And you have never seen her since?"

"Never; nor can I hope to."

"You may yet, Mrs. Rowland," said Stowell Dale, with strange *empressement*. "Do you think that if your father—"

"My reputed father, if you please, Mr. Dale," interrupted the lady. "He was not my real father, as I have recently discovered."

"Then my question, as relates to him, falls through. I was about to inquire if you thought that if he were to discover his lost child—meaning your sister—he would endeavor to reclaim her?"

"I have reason to believe that he would *now*," was the answer; "and he also wickedly desires to get *me* in his power again. I have just *escaped* from him."

"Escaped!"

"Yes," she said, tremblingly; "and that explains why I was on the train without travelling dress and baggage, and why I did not purchase my tickets at the ticket-office. I was anxious to escape all possible notice, so I did not enter the ladies' room at the depot, but took a seat in the car at once."

"Why do these men so persecute you?"

"First, because I possess some secrets dangerous to them; secondly, because I had been subpœnaed to appear as a witness in an important trial, involving the personal safety of several high-standing villains; and, thirdly, because it has lately been discovered—as I chanced to overhear my pretended father say to one of his confederates—that I and my sister, if the latter be living, are co-heirs to an immense fortune, which has long been in litigation in the courts of one of the southern States, but which, it is now thought, will become in great part ours if we appear to claim it."

"But how is it that you ever fell into this man's power?" inquired Mr. Dale, wonderingly.

"He was an enemy of my father—his former rival, I believe—and we were stolen from our parents, both of us, while infants."

"And now his object is—"

"*To marry me to his son*, and then lay claim to the recovered fortune. The amount involved is several millions—a tempting prize, even to those who all their lives have rolled in wealth."

"It is a wicked plot," said Mr. Dale; "but they would not dare to attempt its execution. This man who once pretended to be your father would thereby expose himself to a criminal prosecution for abducting you and your sister."

"He does not fear that; he has bought judges and juries before, and he thinks to do it again."

"What a strange story," exclaimed Jessie; "it is just like a romance."

"And a romance it is, my dear young friend," said Mrs. Rowland; "but a very sad one to me. I have not told all yet."

"Oh, no; I forget; you have not spoken of—"

And Jessie paused, reflecting that this must be the most painful part of all.

"Of my husband, you would say. A year ago I was married to a noble and honorable young man—a Virginian of proud family—who went to New York to transact some important business for his father. So successful was he in this that he had a large sum left to his own account, it having been agreed between him and his father that all above a certain amount should fall to the latter as commission. Being young, high-spirited, and yet, though cultured, for the city unsophisticated, he resolved before returning home to see the sights of the metropolis. He was evidently a stranger, and was quickly marked for ruin by those who make it their wicked business to entrap the unwary. Accordingly on one pretext or other they endeavored to insinuate themselves into his favor. But all their wiles and stratagems and ruses were used upon him without avail. Nothing could win him to the gaming-table, nothing seduce him from his beautiful propriety.

"The man who then called me daughter—for he had not yet revealed to me the truth concerning my parentage—was among those who had exerted themselves to decoy Winter Rowland to the splendid haunts of vice. He failed as others did. Then he endeavored to use *me* as an instrument to accomplish his purpose. It was so managed that I was introduced to Mr. Rowland at the opera, and I soon saw that, had I chosen, I could have won him to enter the path where the spoilers waited for him. But I could not do that; I warned him and saved him. He was grateful to me, and sought more of my company. The result was love and a happy marriage. I had told him all, as I then knew it, before I would listen to him; knowing all, he still loved me. He returned to his native State to prepare the way for my introduction into his family. But ere he came to me again it had become the desire of my pretended father that I should ignore my marriage with Winter Rowland. I was astounded at the cruel request, and of course refused. But the determination was that such should be my course. Everything having failed to secure my consent to the rejection of my husband, the game was taken into my false father's hands alone.

"It was represented to my husband that I had proved untrue to him; and the dreadful fraud was, as I am forced to believe, successful. I have heard since that he is dead, but it may be that *I* am deceived in that. Such," concluded Mrs. Rowland, "is my sad story; and here I am thrust upon your hospitality, the heiress it may be of millions, yet having nothing in my possession but the gains of sinful pursuits, if not of actual crime."

"And here," said Stowell Dale in generous, assuring tones, "you shall remain, until you can go forth with safety to claim your own; and if that time shall not come, here, then, if you will accept it, is your permanent home. You shall be the companion *and sister* of my Jessie, and a second daughter to me."

Mr. Dale spoke with an emotion so deep and earnest that Mrs. Rowland was not only tearfully grateful, but moved in a strange, secret way she could not quite understand. There appeared to be more than a hospitable meaning in the Christian conductor's manner.

She faltered her thanks, her heart too full for articulate utterance.

Jessie was delighted anew. She had now what she always wanted—a sister; "ready made," as she somewhat quaintly declared.

"Why did you choose to come to Philadelphia, unacquainted as you were?" asked Mr. Dale.

"I cannot say why it was; the way offered, and I felt impelled to."

"Can there be a fate in this?" mused Mr. Dale, and then he said aloud—

"I trust there is a Providence guiding you, Mrs. Rowland. Yours is a strange story, and I have yet much to say to you in regard to it; but now, as we are all in need of rest, we will retire. Jessie, you will conduct our guest to a chamber—your own, if you choose; we will not introduce her to your aunt until morning."

When Mrs. Rowland retired that night, it was with a heart so full of gratitude that her prayers could hardly find voice. "Oh, how I am blessed!" she thought; "there are Christian hearts yet in the world."

CHAPTER V.

NEXT MORNING.

When Stowell Dale sought his chamber that night, it was not to lay his head on a pillow of rest. His mind was filled with disturbing thoughts, for a fear—a selfish fear—was upon him, though in his generous soul he rejoiced that he had been enabled to minister to a friendless and persecuted one.

"But what if Jessie—my darling Jessie—should prove to be the lost sister of this poor lady?" he reflected. "What if it should be proven that all these years I have only cherished a fond fancy?—that Jessie is *not* my child; and that, if this web of mystery is unravelled, she may be claimed as the daughter of another, and taken from me? I could not give her up, I feel, though a mourning mother were to ask it; she is the flower of my life; the one presence that fills the world for me."

Strange words for Conductor Dale!

But more than sixteen years agone, when he had just fairly settled himself in life, and he and his young wife were happier than ever, with their first babe, a great sorrow had blighted his happiness. The fair young mother died, and ere his grief for her abated, the child she left him was stolen—stolen by its nurse; a scheming, vindictive woman, who had herself presumed to love the father of her little charge; had vainly endeavored to get herself taken in the dead wife's place; and in the rage and bitterness that followed her failure, had abducted the infant child.

Eighteen months of misery went by, and then the wretched father, after a dreadful railroad accident, wrecking, with slaughter, a train on which he was a passenger, found himself strangely become the sole protector of a lovely child, apparently about two years of age. "How like what my lost Jessie must be!" was his thought, as he beheld the little one. Then followed a wilder, more startling thought. "Oh, what if she *is* my child, thus restored to me!"

It seemed a plausible conclusion. No one appeared to claim the little waif; the person in whose charge she had been, had probably perished in the burning of the wrecked train, which followed the disaster.

On the underclothing of the child was found the embroidered name—"Jessie Day."

"She *is* mine—my stolen darling!" was the joyful and irresistible conclusion that resulted in the father's mind from this discovery.

And Stowell Dale, happy in the belief that his child had thus been, providentially and miraculously restored to him, took the sweet-faced lisper home, and cherished her and reared her as his own.

The child of his affections she surely grew to be; the child of his blood he also believed her to be.

But what now, after hearing the lady's story?

If Mrs. Rowland had a sister, and that sister was the Jessie Day of the railroad catastrophe, then she was no child of his.

Mr. Dale, since he had recovered (as he thought) his daughter, had been much harassed by a haunting fear that he would some day, in some strange manner, lose her. The feeling or apprehension or whatever it was, had given him much unrest. Often in his dreams he would see Jessie, bright and happy near him; and then she would suddenly disappear, with a pleading, pitiful cry of "Father, father, save me!"

Then he would awake, and perhaps pass many uneasy hours thinking of his unpleasant vision.

Perhaps he was morbid on the subject; he had thought so himself; but now—

No wonder that Stowell Dale was disturbed by the semi-revelations he had that night heard.

The conclusion he arrived at before he slept was that he would say nothing to any one, at least for a time, of the strange bearing of a portion of the lady's story upon his own knowledge of facts relating to Jessie.

His house should be Mrs. Rowland's home, as he had promised her; and if her friends and relatives should never be found, she would at least be safe from her enemies, a member of his own little family circle.

When Aunt Mary descended to the dining room the next morning, she found Jessie there ahead of her, busy as a bee, but pausing in her work at once to whisper the wonderful story of the strange lady's return and presence.

"And she is here now?" said Aunt Mary, interrogatively.

"Yes, aunty, sleeping like *you* do sometimes when you take stuff from the little brown vial."

"You didn't give *her* any of it, Jessie?"

"Oh, dear, no! I don't believe in taking medicine, aunty; especially medicine to make us sleep. It's just the *fear* gone off of her; she knows she's safe now."

"Poor creature," said Aunt Mary, feelingly. "I suppose she is a worthy woman; not a sham and trickster."

"A real lady, aunty. Wait until you see her."

Aunt Mary did, hearing all that Jessie could tell first, and being quietly pleased with Mrs. Rowland afterward.

After breakfasting, Mr. Dale spent half an hour or so in the parlor with his "guest," before departing to take charge of his train.

Mrs. Rowland was anxious to communicate to him the further reasons she had to dread falling into the power of those from whom she had escaped.

"These men," she said, "are members of a clique—villains of high degree, who are engaged in the most varied and extraordinary schemes of fraud and iniquity. They despise small gains, thinking only of hundreds of thousands of dollars—I might truthfully say millions—as the profits of their lawless daring and intrigue. You may be astounded, Mr. Dale, when I tell you that they secretly control courts and plunder corporations—especially railroad corporations."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Dale, very much interested.

"It is the members of this powerful and unscrupulous cabal or junto who have wrought such confusion among the great railway bodies of New York and other States. In the cloud of this confusion they plunder and enrich themselves, caring nothing for the rights and claims of others. Belmont Mathewson—as now he is called, though formerly he was known as Henrique Day—the man who once and for a long time represented to me that he was my father, is one of the leaders in this villainy. He finds that its corrupt rewards are greater than those to be obtained in what he calls the legitimate business of gambling—that is, of keeping an establishment of that character."

Mrs. Rowland shuddered as she spoke.

"And it is in the society of such men—of them and of their associates—that most of my life has been passed."

"And yet you have no sympathy with them," said the conductor; "nor are you willing to profit by their fraudulent successes."

"Oh, no, no," she returned, almost passionately. "I would balk them if I could; bring them to justice. And I *have* done something of this; that is why they fear me. I hold secrets dangerous to more than one who carries a proud, disdainful head among better men than themselves. Do I delay you, Mr. Dale?"

"Not at all; I have half an hour yet to spare with you."

"Then I will proceed. Some time ago there was a gigantic plot laid to obtain just such rascally control of your own famous road, the Pennsylvania, as has been obtained over others. Few suspected—few dreamed of the danger that threatened it; for a time its own powerful and able managers held their grasp of its destinies they knew not how lightly. There were traitors in their midst—the grandest, most audacious plot that the mind of ambitious villainy ever conceived was laid and was in process of execution, when it was frustrated by information—"

Mrs. Rowland hesitated; she seemed to feel that her story was too wild and improbable to be believed, especially since she was of necessity about to make herself the heroine of it.

Conductor Dale understood her; but he did not doubt her.

"By information given by you?" he cried, and excitedly, for he was thrillingly interested.

"Yes, sir," she acknowledged, modestly.

"It is a strange story," she added.

"But true, I do not doubt. Just such monstrous villainy as you have described is a-foot to-day."

"Yes," assented Mrs. Rowland, earnestly. "For the object which these men had in view is still in sight; this mighty effort to rule and ruin is not yet abandoned. But one man stands greatly in the way of the secret workers. Have the trains to which the directors' car is attached repeatedly met with obstructions on the track during the past year?"

"They have," declared Mr. Dale.

"And have attempts been made to throw from the track special trains, conveying directors?"

"Such has been the case."

"And will be in the future," declared Mrs. Rowland. "The murder of certain officers of the great corporation you serve, would be a most happy result of these attempts to some."

"You startle me, Mrs. Rowland."

"And further, Mr. Dale," she said, solemnly, "if it were known that I had made this communication to you, your own life would be in danger. Perhaps I should have told you this before. I may be bringing trouble upon you."

"Let not that thought disturb you, Mrs. Rowland. It is well that I have been informed of what you know."

"These wicked plotters would not hesitate to instruct their agents—whom they have in every city and considerable town on the lines of the Pennsylvania's roads—to throw a whole train from the track, if thereby they could have a chance to secure the death of any person whom they dreaded or suspected."

"I believe you, Mrs. Rowland. Oh, the dastardly villains! I have known that wicked game to be played against my own train—not because *I* was the object of a coward's hatred, but because the engineer was. It is the most dastardly crime I can conceive of. To think of the lives of a whole train full of passengers being endangered that a single obnoxious person may possibly be killed! It is diabolical!"

"It is indeed," sighed the lady. "Oh, I hope *you*—and others because of you—may never suffer in that way, for having given me shelter. You may be marked for death, if it is once known that I have confided in you. As I have said, the agents of this powerful junto lurk everywhere; and it may be discovered that I am here."

"Do not distress yourself on my account, Mrs. Rowland," returned Mr. Dale. "My only anxiety is concerning yourself. You must be careful that *you* do not become their victim."

She trembled like one who knew that implacable enemies somewhere waited and watched for her.

"I must go now," said Mr. Dale, rising. "But first, will you not give me the name of the one person you referred to as being especially obnoxious to these plotters?"

"His name is Ellis Lester."

"It must be Harry Lester's father!" exclaimed Jessie, who had entered a little while before. "The young gentleman who was my escort home, last night," she added, in explanation to Mrs. Rowland. "I shall look for him this evening, if father doesn't object."

Mr. Dale did not object, "that he knew of," but cautioned Jessie to say nothing to the young man concerning what she had heard.

He then left the parlor to go to his place of duty—first bidding Mrs. Rowland a very kindly adieu, and taking more than the usual number of parting kisses from Jessie.

He looked with an infinite love into her sunny eyes, saying in his heart—"She *is* my child—she must be, child of my own being as well as of my love."

CHAPTER VI.

A PLOT REVEALED.

In a small but elegantly-furnished apartment of a house on Vine street, two men sat one evening, shortly after the occurrences narrated in the preceding chapters, busily engaged in conversation.

From the low, mysterious tones their voices almost involuntarily assumed—there was no need of caution, for they had no fear of intruders or listeners—it was evident that some weighty and secret, and perhaps criminal subject was being discussed.

Their own words will best enlighten us on that point.

"So you have tracked her to the conductor's residence on Green street?" said one, interrogatively.

"Yes," was the reply; "we have made sure of her presence there."

The first speaker was a young man—a mere youth; handsome in feature, graceful in person, and of easy and pleasing bearing. His complexion was very fair; his hair dark, and long almost as a woman's; his face was entirely beardless; his mouth sweet and mobile; and the expression of his countenance gentle and feminine. On the street his romantic appearance would have attracted attention—he seemed like a being whose part in life was to dream, to dally and to enjoy; one of those for whom the *dolce far niente*—the sweet do nothing—is enough.

But his existence had in reality more earnestness if not more innocence in it than that.

His companion was a much older person—not less than forty-five—and was altogether a less agreeable-looking individual. His features were almost entirely concealed by a heavy beard, but a pair of crafty eyes peeped out under his dark brows, and above them shone a broad forehead, wall-white and unwrinkled. He was of heavy build, but extremely well-proportioned, his long, shapely limbs being models a sculptor might have contemplated with delight.

He was richly dressed, but with too much ostentation for a gentleman. A massive watch chain of most novel and intricate design crossed the front of his velvet vest; diamond studs sparkled on his shirt-bosom; and on the little finger of his left hand shone, set in a circle of chased gold, a solitaire of "purest ray serene," and doubtless of immense value.

"And what is to be done next?" inquired the youth, after the answer he had received to his first question.

"We are to regain possession of her person, and if possible ascertain what secrets she has blabbed."

"Of course she has told all she knew, with a liberal guess at what she didn't; what woman would not?"

"You are severe on the sex, Cecil; especially for one so favored by it. But never mind that. It would be interesting to ascertain what the exact knowledge this lady possesses of our affairs is. She may not be as dangerous as we fear; but Mathewson was so easy with her until of late, that it is to be presumed that she is better informed than it is safe either for us or *for her* to be. A woman, if she *is* little, can always make a big fuss—that's proverbial, historical. What is to be apprehended in this case is not that Mrs. Rowland (for such, I suppose, we must call her) will divulge anything practical—she could hardly do that—but that she will warn and alarm these thick-headed magnates, and then our game is up. If 'treason' is once whispered among them, there will be such an overhauling of reputations, such a searching into individual action as was never known before. The weak timber will be thrown out, and paint and putty won't be accepted for strength."

"But even if there were nothing of this sort of thing in contemplation," remarked the younger of the two, "I suppose that Mrs. Rowland is still a personage of importance to us."

"As almost the sole heir to a fortune of seven millions of dollars, I should think so," responded the other, emphatically. "You see, her mother is dead, after this decision of the courts in her favor, and as Mathewson has in his possession the proofs of her identity, all he has to do is to *make sure of her silence*—of Mrs. Day's daughter's, I mean—and step forward with his papers and have her claim the money. Old Mrs. Day has few or no living relatives, and there won't be much trouble in managing the matter on account of them. The work will be done in the law; and what does the law care about persons, so that forms are observed?"

"Whew! I wouldn't much mind marrying this Mrs. Rowland myself. I suppose there would be a few millions left after purchasing the silence of my fellow-worthies."

"That's the term to use," interrupted the other, approvingly. "I thought you were about to say fellow-rascals. Never, my young friend, apply that odious appellation to gentlemen."

"You are punctilious, I observe, Mr. Marbury. I *do* forget conventionalities occasionally."

"Now to my plan."

"Oh, you have a plan!"

"Yes; a pretty one. We must get our hands on this Mrs. Rowland, and the question is how to do it?"

"She will be apt to remain closely indoors for awhile there at Dale's. By the way, how did you discover that she went to his house?"

"Oh, we took it for granted that she would. We knew that he had interested himself in her, and it was natural that she should seek him, having no one else to go to; unless," the speaker added, "she was desperate enough to apply to some of the old nabobs of this railroad concern. But she knew that they would only laugh at her, or at least at anything she might tell relating to their corporation interests. It is well they are so incredulous; that fact gives us opportunity. Ha! ha!"

"But your plan; you are full of digressions to-night."

"Yes; but we have plenty of time. Perhaps we could discuss and arrange it more satisfactorily over a bottle of wine."

"A good suggestion. I will ring."

He pulled the bell-cord, and in a few moments an active, colored male servant—*a mute*—made his appearance, and received instructions to bring refreshments, including wine.

Over these they proceeded to the consideration of the matter in hand.

"Yes," said he who had been addressed as Marbury, speaking as if in reply to an observation made some time back by his companion; "Mrs. Rowland has not been out since her arrival at Dale's, nor do I think it likely she will venture into the street for a long while yet. She knows she will be sought, with more than a detective's cunning and patience. Consequently we shall be obliged to look for her where she is concealed."

"Ah; she is to be spirited away from her protectors?"

"That is the idea; and it would be easy enough to put it in successful practice, if we could only secure a little *inside* help."

"You always believed in working from the inside as well as the outside, Mr. Marbury," remarked Cecil Farnell—for such was his name in full.

"There is nothing like it; win a lady's heart, and everything else is easy enough."

"Well," laughed Cecil, gayly, "that is diametrically opposed to your present procedure; here it is the lady's person that is to be secured first."

"Oh, yes; well, hang it, you can't make a good rule fit every case. This is an exceptional matter. *Her* heart went some time ago. But to resume our main subject. I have just found that it will probably be easy for us to secure that desirable inside assistance—fate or fortune is favoring us strangely. Look there."

He picked up a daily paper, and pointed to an advertisement it contained, under the head of "Wants." Cecil read aloud:

"Wanted, at No. 6—, Green street, a neat and intelligent American girl, to do light housework. Wages good. Apply immediately, in person, at the house."

"That's Stowell Dale's number," spoke the elder man. "You see how it is; they want an additional servant on account of Mrs. Rowland. They have only a small girl with them at present, who, it may be, is to be discharged, and a larger one taken."

"And your idea is—"

"You guess it, of course."

"For *me* to become servant in that family."

"Certainly."

Cecil laughed, and held up his slender, white hands. "Must I put these in dish-water?" he said, with a lugubrious look.

"A few dips won't spoil them."

"Must I rub-a-dub-dub, so?" And he made a comical imitation of the movements necessary in the process of washing clothes.

"They put their washing out," returned Marbury, encouragingly.

"Must I build the fire in the furnace?"

"Dale's daughter will help you; you can build a fire in her heart—oh, no; I forget; you are to be a maid and not a man."

"Is she pretty?"

"She is more than pretty, and as sweet as eglantine."

"How do you know all these things about Conductor Dale and his family, etc.?"

"That is not a serious question; you are aware that we find out about all that we want to.

"Yes; I know that. Well, to the point again; I'll go, of course. It will be capital fun, if nothing more."

"It is intended to be more than that. You are a matchless actor, Cecil—I wonder you don't go to the stage, anyhow. I have seen you in private theatricals, when I thought you perfect—especially in feminine parts."

"Oh, I will make an inimitable servant," exclaimed Cecil, with his gay, light laugh; "I'll be *so* neat; *so* intelligent; so respectful and obedient; they won't want to part with me."

"Well, get ready and go," said Marbery; "not to-night of course, but early to-morrow. Prepare your wardrobe and *your references*."

"Oh, I have the best of *them!*"

"And you will tell a charming story of course; of how you have lately become reduced, though of respectable family; how you are attached to domestic life, dread factories and sewing-shops, but just want quiet, home-work, with no privileges but that of going out occasionally—"

"And coming to see you," laughed Cecil, "to report how I am getting along."

"Yes; and when you are ready to open the doors to us, with the lady nicely drugged."

"Yes, yes; and so forth. It will be jolly, only I will have to do without my cigar for awhile. It wouldn't do for a 'neat and intelligent American girl' to smoke—as if they weren't all neat and intelligent! I wonder if I'll pass, Marbury? Do you think I will look enough like a servant, when I get my hair done up in the prevailing style, and my toggery on?"

"I have no doubt of the result when you present yourself at Mr. Dale's. You'll be accepted, never fear; such a modest, respectable-looking creature as you will make!"

"Ha! ha!" rang out Cecil's musical laugh, like a silver chime. "Supposing I fall in love with the conductor's daughter, what then?"

"Supposing you don't. Don't meddle with the conductor's daughter. Poor thing! she may—nay, will—have trouble soon."

"Why?"

"Her father is spotted."

"He knows too much, you mean."

"He *may* know too much; it is best to make sure of him."

"What is to happen to him?"

"He is to take the Owl line soon, I understand. Some changes are to be made; and then an accident is to come off, according to arrangement, and he is to suffer for it."

"You are a cold-blooded villain, Marbury."

"Hush, my boy; so are you. Let us retire."

They left the room and went to a sleeping-apartment above it.

Then Cecil selected a disguise from at least a dozen different ones on hand, and busied himself for a considerable time in trying it on and making some necessary alterations and additions.

Then the two plotters turned off the gas and sought their beds.

(*To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 19.*)

THE WHITE LADY;

OR,

The Brierton Mystery.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BIRD FLOWN.

Stephen was very punctual—a little too punctual for his own peace of mind.

He went into the house with a bright, eager face, and looked in all the rooms for Delia, but no Delia was to be seen.

Then he called her lustily, his tone sharpening over so little.

"You tiresome girl, where have you hidden now?"

Still no reply.

Mrs. Ransome appeared at this moment, and he addressed himself to her.

"Do you know where my wife is gone?"

"No," Mrs. Ransome said; "she was here a few hours ago."

"I know that as well as you," answered Stephen, impatiently, "but where is she now?"

"Perhaps she felt lonesome, and went to her aunt's."

Grateful for this suggestion, Stephen jumped into the cart again, and drove off to the farm. Just as he reached the gate he met Mrs. Merridew herself coming his way, and this struck him as rather a bad sign, for he cried, almost breathlessly—

"Have you seen my wife?"

"I am going to see her now, and shall be quicker if you will give me a lift," said Mrs. Merridew. "What made you think she was here?"

"Because she isn't at the cottage," answered Stephen, sternly; "that is all."

"Nonsense? where else should she be?"

"That is exactly what I want to know."

"You men are such poor hands at finding anything," said Mrs. Merridew, disdainfully. "I tell my husband that if there was a mountain before his eyes, he'd go twenty miles out of his way to look for it. I suppose it's the way you are made; but it is unfortunate, too. I'll be bound I find Delia the moment I set foot in the house."

Her confident tone reassured Stephen somewhat, but he looked gloomy, too. He had caught just a slight glimmer of Delia's wedding-dress as it lay on the bed, and, somehow, the omen struck him as unfavorable.

When they reached the cottage, Mrs. Merridew jumped down quickly, and ran up in front, breaking the strange, mysterious silence that reigned in the cottage, by calling "Delia!" with a certain determination that showed she would not be denied.

Even she, bold, defiant, and practical as she was, was startled by the peculiar stillness that followed.

"You had better light a candle," she said, her loud voice softening involuntarily; "perhaps she has fainted, poor child! Let her come back with me to-night, Stephen. When people are in trouble, they haven't heart to begin a new life. The master and she are wonderful friends, and he'll manage to cheer her up."

"No, by Heaven!" exclaimed Stephen, roughly, "I won't be put off another hour. I've been shilly-shallied with long enough, as it is. She'll have to live with me all the rest of her life, and she may as well begin sooner as later. Besides, who ought to be able to comfort her so well as her husband?"

"That is true," said Mrs. Merridew, who knew enough of him now not to be surprised at this outburst; "but she is a poor, frail, tender little thing, Stephen, and she has never heard a harsh word in all her life."

"Who says she is going to hear any now?"

"I don't, for one; but I think she would be better with Merridew and me, just for a day or two. I do, indeed."

"Then I swear I will take her home this night, living or dead!"

It was a wild, foolish oath, and as impotent as human oaths must needs be—when the most powerful of us all cannot see an inch beyond our way.

"Hush!" exclaimed Mrs. Merridew, really shocked; "remember that my poor sister lies here dead!"

She had managed to light a candle by this time, and went straight toward the death-chamber as she finished speaking.

Stephen followed.

Here they found Mrs. Ransome, in an arm-chair, fast asleep, but no Delia.

When they came to her own little chamber—pure and dainty in its perfect order and tasteful simplicity—the bridal-dress lay there, mocking Stephen with its pale shimmer and glisten, but no Delia still.

No Delia anywhere.

"She is gone!" Mrs. Merridew said, at last, looking very crestfallen. "I knew she would answer me if she were here. I can't understand it at all."

"I can," Stephen replied, and such a storm of invectives and oaths burst from him, that Mrs. Merridew was actually appalled.

She had never seen any one give way to such violent passion as this. His whole frame shook; the veins in his forehead swelled out as if they would burst; his speech was labored and thick, his chest heaved tumultuously.

He had loved Delia in his own way—there could be no doubt of this; and Mrs. Merridew could not help pitying him, although, seeing what she saw, it struck her as possible that Delia had had a lucky escape.

Stephen cooled down presently, but the watchful, menacing calm that succeeded his fierce outburst seemed to Mrs. Merridew the more dangerous of the two.

She did not attempt to soothe or pacify him, or make any excuses for her niece; but, turning her back on him, literally and metaphorically, walked into the chamber of the dead, and softly shut to the door.

She knew, by some instinct, that Stephen would not care to follow her there.

She heard him leave the house presently, and wondered what mischief he had in his mind; for if ever a man looked ripe for some evil deed, it was Stephen Young.

She would have been agreeably surprised if she had seen him drive straight home, put up the cart, and then go into the house.

His housekeeper met him at the door, and as she was expecting her young mistress, and had been told to make preparations for her arrival, it was only natural she should ask if anything was the matter, when she found him alone.

Her idea was, of course, that Delia had been taken ill; but the demon within him whispered that she knew all, and was mocking him.

So he pushed roughly past her, saying, "Mind your own business, will you? There's nothing so bad but what you women's tongues can make it worse."

The woman shrank back as shocked and startled as Mrs. Merridew had been at the evil expression of his eyes, and took care to keep out of the way whilst he remained in the house.

But this was not long. He went to the little sitting-room, which he had newly furnished for his bride's reception, and, kicking the furniture savagely right and left as he passed to the cupboard, drank down a full glass of raw brandy, and strode out again.

Slinking along in the deepest shadow of the hedge, and hiding when he heard a step, Stephen came, at last, to Merridew's farm.

All the animals were housed for the night, and the men had gone home, so that there was no fear of being disturbed now.

He knew enough of the habits of the house to understand that Mrs. Merridew's lodgers would have the best parlor, and he crept around to their window, and hid himself amongst the shrubs, watching the couple within.

His eyes bright, and eager, and cruel, were like the eyes of some wild beast, concealed in the jungle, keenly observing his prey until he has made sure of his spring.

Once Captain Vane came to the window, then Stephen clenched his sinewy fist down in the darkness, and had hard work to control himself. But he conquered, and, hushing his very breath, waited still.

It is impossible to describe the glow and thrill of savage exultation with which he marked Captain Vane take up his hat, light a cigar, and then step over the low sill, and into the garden.

His revenge was so near. Stephen could afford to be patient, and take full precautions now.

He followed softly, and as the young officer, absorbed in a gloomy revery, and unconscious of the cruel, panther-like step behind, was about to turn and retrace his steps, a blow of Stephen's fist felled him stunned and bleeding to the ground.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TUG OF WAR.

For one minute Captain Vane lay perfectly motionless; and believing his work to be done, Stephen was about to steal away again, when suddenly, to his surprise, the young officer sprang to his feet, and aimed a blow at Stephen's chest that took away his breath, and made him stagger in his turn.

"Coward!" he cried. "You can't be English born and bred, or you would never attack a man from behind."

"You have done more than that to me," replied Stephen, trying fiercely to clutch at the other's throat.

But Captain Vane was on his guard now, and catching him by the wrist, held it in a firm grip.

"I have never set eyes on you in my life. How, therefore, could I have injured you?"

"You have set eyes on my wife, though. You won't deny that, I suppose?" hissed Stephen, between his clenched teeth.

"I must know first who your wife is."

"Come, that won't do for me;" and Stephen aimed another blow at his adversary's head.

Captain Vane stepped back a pace, and they stood confronting each other, both panting with rage, for Captain Vane was fully roused now at what he considered such an unprovoked attack.

"If I do not know you, I am not likely to know your wife, it seems to me."

"Husbands are in the way, ain't they?" sneered Stephen. "I don't suppose you were in any hurry to make my acquaintance."

"It doesn't appear to me that I lost anything by the delay," said Captain Vane, with a smooth irony, that irritated Stephen the more for being so entirely beyond him.

"I don't suppose you did," he growled.

"I can even venture to be sure that I did not."

Believing that the young officer had tempted Delia to leave him, and would join her shortly when suspicion was lulled, this speech seemed to the infuriated husband an aggravation of the injury done him, and he fumbled in his bosom for the knife he had brought with him.

Providentially it had slipped out, and was gone.

But none the more should his enemy escape. He would wait until he got him at a disadvantage, and then he would hammer the life out of him with his fists.

No one was by; and if he dragged him into a ditch, and left him there, who should be able to bring the crime home to him?

Captain Vane kept his eye steadily fixed on his opponent, wondering what this silence meant.

The night was rather dark, and although they could just see each other's faces, it was impossible to read the expression of Stephen's sufficiently to serve as any warning or guide.

"You fancied, I dare say, that I shouldn't suspect you," Stephen went on, after a while. "It wasn't what one would expect of a gentleman, certainly, to come sneaking after a farmer's wife. But the girl took your fancy, and not being accustomed to deny yourself anything you had a liking for, you made up your mind you would have her at all costs; but I promise you one thing"—and Stephen's voice shook with the intensity of his rage and menace—"*you shall never set eyes on her again this side of the grave!*"

"Now you have worked yourself up to the proper degree of passion," said Captain Vane, coolly, "perhaps you will have the goodness to tell me who your wife is, and what earthly interest I could have had in her disappearance. If she has left you, I should say, judging from what I have seen, that you were such a violent brute, she couldn't live with you any longer."

"It's very well to make excuses—"

"But I don't make any excuses for you whatever," Captain Vane interposed.

"And if I am a violent brute," Stephen went on, without heeding the interruption, "she had better trust a brute than a coward and a sneak."

"I have known people who were all three," replied Captain Vane, significantly.

"You mean me!" thundered Stephen, springing fiercely toward him, and thrusting his fist in his face. "You mean me!"

Captain Vane parried the blow, and returned it with a certain interest that surprised Stephen, who had always entertained the erroneous idea that gentlemen could not fight, before he answered—

"You are behaving rather better now. As you attacked me from behind at first, I am rather surprised that you have got your courage high enough to meet me face to face."

"I'll show you what I'm made of!" Stephen cried. But, blinded by his rage, he struck out so wildly and rashly, that Captain Vane, who was powerfully made, and not above using nature's own weapons when occasion required, soon pinioned him to the ground, and kept him there to cool.

"And now," he said, disdainfully, "perhaps you'll tell me a little more about your wife—her name, for instance? I am very curious to learn her name; if I knew yours, it might be some help."

"I call myself Stephen Young," growled Stephen, lying quite still, the better to deceive his adversary into the belief that he was conquered. "My wife is Merridew's niece, Delia."

"Merridew's niece, Delia!" he repeated, in some surprise. And then he added, compassionately, "Poor little girl? It's a mercy she has run away—for you would soon have broken her heart."

"Not so quick as you will, I fancy."

"I am sorry to say that I am never likely to have the pleasure of seeing Delia again. She was very good to me when I was ill; and I shall not cease to think of her with a gratitude and regard, in spite of all your wild threats."

"Then all I can say," cried Stephen, passionately, "you are a worse man even than I took you for, if, after winning her heart, and inducing her to leave her husband, you never meant to provide for her. However," he added, triumphantly, "it will give her a lesson, I fancy. She'll know which is most to be trusted—a young sprig of fashion, or an honest yeoman."

"You don't call yourself an honest yeoman, I hope?"

"You never heard of my cheating or deceiving any one yet."

"I should fancy you must have cheated and deceived poor Delia extensively, before you ever persuaded her to become your wife," answered the captain, a prophetic instinct warning him of the truth.

Stephen struggled desperately to free himself. He could only answer this accusation with a blow. But Captain Vane felt his muscles quivering, and was prepared.

"You shall go when I have done with you," he said; "but I'll know first what made you come to me when you found your wife gone."

"She loves you!" Stephen blustered; "and if you had no evil designs, how came you to give her a locket! I happened to be close by that evening, and saw what was going on."

"Then you unite eavesdropping to your other amiable qualities, honest yeoman!" flashed Captain Vane, scornfully.

"I had no thought of finding out anything. I was sitting in the hedge with my gun, looking for rabbits, when I saw you meet."

"And you didn't move, of course?"

"Why should I move?" replied Stephen, sullenly; "I was on my own ground."

"Well, some people would have taken care to advertise their presence; but they wouldn't have been honest yeomen, I dare say. However, neither Delia nor myself have reason to be ashamed of what you saw or heard. I thanked her for her kindness, and then we shook hands and parted."

"Don't forget about the locket."

"We have already mentioned that, I think."

"*You* haven't."

"I had almost forgotten the circumstance, until you reminded me of it. I did give her a locket, certainly; and can only regret that it has got into such bad hands."

"And you mean to pretend you did not know that Delia loved you?"

"I believe that to be as great a falsehood as ever was spoken," answered Captain Vane, hotly; "and if it had been true, you must have had very little honor or manliness to betray her secret. If I had chosen to marry a woman, knowing this, the tortures of the inquisition should never have wrung the confession from my lips; and I would even have kept the knowledge of my discovery from her, to save her pride. Having no shame in my presence, she might, perhaps, have learnt to love me best in time; but even then I would never have told her what I knew. However, I am thankful to believe that Delia does not care for me, and that you owe her loss entirely to your own ungoverned temper, and the evil means you employed to force her into the marriage."

Stephen lifted himself by an effort that strained every sinew in his body, freed his arms by a desperate struggle, and driving his fist into Captain Vane's face, they closed.

For a long while the fight was uncertain. They were both strong men, and Stephen kept better command over his own powers, seeing that the issue must depend upon his self-restraint.

Captain Vane, on his part, did not care to be ingloriously beaten by a country yeoman, who had insulted and misjudged him, and exerted himself to parry the other's attacks.

"Where is my wife?" hissed Stephen, his hot breath meeting the young officer's cheeks. "If you don't tell me where to find her, you sha'n't leave this place alive!"

"If I did know," was the determined reply, "I would die twice over before I told you. I am only too glad to think that the poor child is out of your reach."

"So that she is within yours?"

"I wish she was, with all my heart. Do you know what I'd tell her in that case?" said Captain Vane, whose patience was at an end now.

"I made love to her first; and so, perhaps, I can guess."

"I'd tell her to keep out of your way, at all events; I'd tell her to perish of hunger, and die of cold, rather than eat your bread, or take shelter under your roof! And what's more, I'd find her a decent home somewhere where she could hide her pretty head, and live in peace and honor; and I'd take care it was in a place your evil shadow would never darken! That's what I would do if I knew where Delia was!"

"You would, would you?" thundered Stephen; and it seemed as if the brief cessation from hostilities had strengthened both, for they renewed the affray vigorously.

Neither seemed to gain much advantage until Captain Vane stumbled against a stone, and nearly fell. Then Stephen clutched his throat with an exulting cry, and his life seemed hardly worth a minute's purchase.

But seeing that the other was coward enough to make profit out of this accident, and made sure of victory, the young officer determined to disappoint him.

Rallying his forces, a well-aimed blow sent Stephen reeling; and it looked like retribution, for his foot struck against the same stone that had well-nigh finished his adversary.

He fell heavily to the ground, and Captain Vane, being much too generous, and too honorable, to take advantage of his position, left him there, and went back home.

If Stephen had been less insolent and aggressive, he might even have helped him to rise; but, under all the circumstances, he did not feel inclined to meddle with his fate.

He looked back once, out of curiosity only, but Stephen was still prostrate evidently, for he saw no sign of him anywhere; and so, troubling no more about him, he returned to his friend.

"You walk like an elephant!" Major Chester said, rousing as he entered; "and—But, good heavens, Paul! what is the matter?"

Captain Vane, of course, explained.

"The scoundrel!" cried Major Chester, furiously. "I hope you punished him well!"

"I didn't want to soil my hands more than I could help, you know."

"Yes; only these fellows require to be taught that gentlemen won't be trifled with!" replied Major Chester, haughtily. "I never should fight one unless I was quite obliged; but, if I did fight, I'd take care to master!"

"I'm not sure that I haven't," answered his friend, with a smile. "Mr. Young lies sprawling on the ground yonder, and here I am, safe and sound.

"But I can't say you are as good-looking as when I saw you last."

"A great deal has happened since then."

"But, upon my word, Paul! I sha'n't fancy going out with you. You don't know how disreputable you look, with your bruises and black eyes!"

"You talk as if I had twenty black eyes at least," said Captain Vane, smiling; "whereas I am quite proud of only having one."

"Well, as long as you are satisfied, of course I am. You haven't lost all your cigars in the *mêlée*?"

"Which means that you want one, I suppose?" replied Captain Vane, taking out his case.

And they puffed away zealously until Mrs. Merridew came herself to see what they would have for supper, being eager to find listeners to the strange story she had to tell.

You may be sure Captain Vane did not consider it necessary to reveal the part he had taken in the *denouement* of the plot, and was almost as shy of showing his face as a timid little maiden of sixteen.

Meanwhile, Stephen picked himself up from the ground, and turned his haggard, passionate face toward the light in Mrs. Merridew's best parlor.

"I'll be revenged yet," he muttered, between his set teeth; "even if I have to wait twenty years, I will be revenged!"

CHAPTER XXV.

LEARNING TO LOVE.

Major Chester, as a practical, self-dependent man, always carried a medicine-chest with him, and a timely application of arnica to his friend's black eye reduced the swelling and discoloration so successfully that he was able to present himself at The Hermitage the next day, the old Squire having invited the two young men to lunch.

Mr. de Lacy was in one of his airy, fantastic moods, and his humor was gay and sparkling. He seemed to give himself up to the enjoyment of the moment, like a child.

And as he talked and laughed, the songs of his birds, in the aviary near, mingled with his deeper tones, and seemed like a running accompaniment to the more marked melody—shallow, but sweet.

Mr. de Lacy would pause every now and then, with a beaming face, and listen.

"Hear my birds!" he would say. "Patti's voice is not half so fine. Fancy paying for a stall at the opera, when you can sit here and listen gratis to such divine melody as that!"

"You see, you are an enthusiast, papa," Madeleine said. "These gentlemen, no doubt, prefer Patti."

"At the opera," Major Chester allowed.

"But not here," the old Squire was sure.

"Well—no. I am a great advocate for having everything in its right time and place."

After the meal was over, Mr. de Lacy rose and led the way to the garden; and when Major Chester say that he was to have his host's exclusive attention as usual, he determined to frustrate his purpose.

If his friend's feelings had been interested, it would have been a different thing.

Pretending not to hear the remark Mr. de Lacy had addressed to him, which was intended to provoke a long discussion, Major Chester stepped aside, and let Captain Vane pass out before him.

"Don't wait for me," he said, nodding gayly to his friend; "I want Miss de Lacy to show me that photograph we were talking about just now, if she will be so good. I hear it is very fine, and I have seen the original in the Dresden Gallery, you know. We sha'n't be long."

This arrangement, being contrary to his own plans, must have severely tried the old Squire's Christian spirit; but he accepted it blandly, and began a conversation with his *si devant* guest.

But his attention wandered strangely, and Captain Vane could not help noticing that he seemed relieved when Major Chester and Madeleine came out of the house.

He made a point of joining them at once, and his manœuvres to bring his daughter and Paul into direct communication were very amusing to a keen observer like the elder officer.

But he took care to defeat them, by keeping close to Madeleine's side, and paying her those attentions she was much too innocent either to misinterpret or repel.

The only pleasure of the task, at first, had been in thwarting the old Squire; but Madeleine was very fair and winning, and made an interesting companion.

She asked him about his travels—which a traveller always likes—and showed herself intelligent and sympathetic.

"I must get papa to take me abroad," she said, with a very bright smile. "It seems so hard to hear of all these wonderful sights, and not to see them."

"You must go with your husband, Miss de Lacy."

"But I may never have a husband," she answered, with charming unconsciousness.

"Do you think, then, that men are blind?"

She turned to him with a deep blush, and an air of real distress.

"Oh, please, Major Chester, don't pay me compliments! I shall be sure that I have taught you somehow to despise me, if you do."

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but I did not really mean that as a compliment. One talks a good deal of nonsense to ladies, I am afraid, for some of them expect it—you will admit that, I am sure; but I hope I know when and where it is likely to be acceptable."

Madeleine walked on silently for a few minutes, apparently digesting his words, but after awhile she said, "Are you quite sure that ladies like flattery, Major Chester?"

"Some of them."

"And do they believe what you say?"

"Not all, perhaps, but enough to put them on very good terms with themselves."

"But, excuse me," continued Madeleine, very earnestly, "is it right to say what you don't think under any possible temptation?"

"I am afraid not."

"Why do you do it?"

"You see, I haven't you always at my elbow to tell me what is right."

"I thought you said just now that you never flattered except where you knew it to be acceptable."

"What are you trying to prove?"

"Simply that you did not believe my word just now."

"I have not flattered you since, at any rate."

"I am afraid I am very countried, and not equal to the task of entertaining a man of the world," she said, with evident pique and vexation. "I don't seem to understand even what I hear."

"I wish I dared say what I think about the matter."

"What hinders you, then?"

"You would accuse me of flattery, for a certainty."

"You are incorrigible, I perceive;" and Madeleine smiled in spite of herself. "You have been so accustomed to ladies who like compliments, I see, that you have got out of the habit of telling the truth."

"I hope not," he answered, gravely.

"I mean to a lady, of course."

"But why should I be less considerate to a lady than to one of my own sex?"

"That is just what I want to know," Madeleine replied.

He gave her a steady, searching glance—a glance that pierced to her very soul. But Madeleine met it without consciousness or shame.

The revelation that followed was certainly fatal to his peace.

Tender, innocent and true, Madeleine had no reason to fear scrutiny, or shrink from analysis. She only asked for justice—and justice in her case meant admiration and love.

Major Chester's eyes came back not only troubled, but sad.

Here was a woman worth winning—one among a thousand; and yet no subtle sense warned him that she was not for him.

But, at any rate, the present was his possession, and he might enjoy that.

He drew a little closer to her side.

"Pardon me," he said, in a softened tone, "if I have given you pain. I am only a rough soldier, and want polishing sadly. I never had a sister, and my mother died soon after I was born, so that, perhaps, you may find it in your kind heart to make some excuse. I would fain be better, if I knew how."

This was a dangerous confidence, and the gradual melting of Madeleine's displeasure showed that it influenced her, and moved her too.

"Right is right," she answered, gently. "The only way to keep straight is to adopt this sentiment, and allow no compromise. I think, sometimes, it must be so good to be a man."

"Why?" he asked, in some surprise.

"Because you have the power of asserting your principles, as it were, and shaming those who deny them. Women have only to hold their peace, and suffer."

"Nay; you, at least, have spoken to some purpose to-day."

"Have I, indeed?" And her beautiful face brightened wonderfully. "I should be very proud if I thought that."

"Can't you believe my word, then!"

"Yes," she said, "now."

And, being a mere child of nature, she held out her hand.

She was a little startled, perhaps, when Major Chester lifted it to his lips; for she flushed crimson to the very roots of her brown hair, and suddenly remembered that they had better join papa.

But Madeleine had learned her lesson, and would never be quite so frank again.

If Major Chester regretted the change, he had only himself to thank for it. Madeleine's calmness was like that of some simple hedge-flower, born where the rude winds never come. But one day the sun might woo her a little too fiercely, and then she would shrink and shiver, and hide her head; for even a hedge-flower knows what is due to herself, and will not suffer her dignity to be assailed.

Major Chester felt that he had made a mistake, and walked on rather moodily. But he was not so preoccupied that he was induced to yield up his place at Madeleine's side.

In vain the old Squire tried to surprise him into a surrender. He held on like grim death: and if Madeleine did not like his principles, perhaps she liked him in spite of them, for she did not give her father that assistance a dutiful daughter should.

But the conversation became general presently, and somehow veered round to the subject of ghosts.

Madeleine, who was naturally timid, declared that she would almost rather die than believe in them. Mr. de Lacy and Major Chester agreed for once in condemning the belief as unfounded and absurd.

Then Captain Vane spoke, and his voice was so grave that it sounded almost stern.

"A month ago," he said, "I was quite of your opinion; but in this interval I have seen something that has entirely altered my feelings and ideas."

The old Squire listened attentively, but asked no questions.

But Madeleine, for whom the subject had a strange fascination, in spite of her fears, ventured to say—

"And what has happened since, to induce you to recant?"

"I have seen Winifred since—that is all."

He tried to speak calmly, but broke down so much that the last word was almost a sob.

The old Squire started violently, and turned ashen white to his very lips.

"I am so unfortunately sensitive," he murmured, in a dazed kind of way, "that a positive assertion of this kind is too much for my nerves. Madeleine, my love, give me your arm."

She went over to him at once, saying, softly—

"I dare say it can be easily explained, papa. Let Captain Vane tell us the whole story."

"By all means," he answered. "Captain Vane, you owe us an explanation. Dearly as many of us love our dead, we prefer to think that our first meeting with them will be in Heaven. What have you to say?"

"Only to repeat what I told you before," replied the captain.

"But we want to know where and how all this happened."

It was Madeleine who spoke this time; and Captain Vane could not refuse to answer her. He therefore proceeded to tell, with deep emotion, of his meeting with the White Lady at Dixremi, and how she bore the self-same features, the very carriage even, as his lost darling, Winifred.

Mr. de Lacy, whose heart seemed even more tender than his daughter's, was greatly affected and overcome.

"You think of her so much," he said, faintly, "that no wonder you were deceived. I still maintain that there are no such things as ghosts."

Major Chester stood by, attentive and watchful, but took no part in the discussion. Captain Vane, of course, asserted that he was certain of his own impression, and could not possibly have been deceived.

The old Squire, loosening his hold of his daughter's arm, faced him with a certain defiance that showed he shared Madeleine's fears, as also her determination to resist allowing himself to be convinced.

"As a friend, I must warn you not to speak of this to any one else," he said, "or they will think you mad. If I did not know you so well, I should be fain to believe this myself."

Madeleine, the peacemaker, softly interposed—

"Dear papa, we all have our own opinions. Even if Captain Vane has been the victim of a delusion, we must respect his faith."

"Quite right, my love; only that I am so unfortunately sensitive, as you know, and these things upset me. Captain Vane is quite welcome to his belief if he will be good enough to keep it out of my way."

"And, of course, papa, from the moment it distresses you, he will do so."

"I had no idea that the subject was painful to you," Captain Vane said, addressing the old Squire. "I will be careful for the future not to annoy you by any such allusions."

"Thank you—thank you," he replied, with his old bland manner and smile. "We have all our peculiarities and idiosyncracies: and a country life, with its monotony and barrenness of incident, conduces to their growth and development. I think I shall run up to town for a few days, just to humanize me a bit."

He looked round, caught Major Chester's eye, and seemed slightly confused.

"You must excuse me," he added, "for talking so much about myself. That is another disadvantage of a country life. We grow egotistical and vain."

"Come, papa, I won't have you speak against yourself," Madeleine cried.

"It may save some one else the trouble, my dear."

"What a dreadfully naughty thing to say, when you know better;" and she laid her head caressingly on his shoulder.

As Mr. de Lacy smoothed the sunny hair, an expression of intense, absorbing love came into his eyes, almost transforming him for the moment. Even Major Chester could not help noticing that he looked like the picture of some saint, with his rapt, ecstatic face set in the frame of his shining white hair.

He began to understand that Mr. de Lacy's one passion was his reverential devotion to the pure, earnest, confiding nature of his child, and that her faith in him was the very salt and savour of his life.

When the two young men left presently, father and daughter were standing hand-in-hand, talking and laughing gayly together; and the old Squire's face was as serene and bright as if there were no such thing as care, or sorrow, or suffering in the world.

About half an hour passed in this way, and then he suddenly said, in a careless tone, "I quite forgot that I was going to town."

"What, to-day, papa?" said his daughter, incredulously.

"This very hour. When I have a plan in my head, I never rest till I have carried it out."

"Only that there can't be any need to hurry so, unless you have important business."

"I have no business anywhere, my love."

"Then wait until to-morrow, papa. It is getting quite late for a journey now."

He took out his watch.

"It is just four, and there is a train at 5.10. If you will kindly see that my bag is filled with a few necessaries—enough, perhaps, for four days' stay—I shall be able to catch that train very well. Procrastination, you know, is the thief of time. If any one is kind enough to inquire as to my whereabouts, you will say that I have gone to London, just for the sake of a little change. And, Madeleine, my darling, what shall I bring you from the great fair?"

"Only yourself, papa."

"That is a very kind compliment, I am sure."

"I never pay you compliments, papa." And, thinking of Major Chester, Madeleine blushed.

"Then I'll say it is a very kind sentiment, instead. But, my love, without wishing to hurry you, there is no time to spare. I'll go and give Joyce his orders about the carriage myself."

"You have quite decided to go this evening?"

"Quite."

Madeleine said no more, but ran into the house to forward his preparations. When he joined her presently, his bag was ready in the hall, and a cup of hot coffee awaiting him, of which he seemed glad.

He looked rather pale now, she thought, as if the excitement of such a sudden journey had been too much for him; but he was in excellent spirits, and told her to be sure and not run away with either of the young officers whilst he was gone.

"And where am I to write, papa?"

"Don't write at all, unless you have any particulars to tell me, and then address to the Langham Hotel."

"London, papa?"

"Why, my dear Madeleine," he said, almost impatiently, "I told you distinctly I was going to town."

"I beg your pardon, papa; but it is better to make quite sure, isn't it?"

"Perhaps so. It is for me to beg your pardon, Madeleine. You are always right, I find."

"How dreadfully you spoil me, papa! I know it is very bad for me, and yet I am going to ask you to spoil me still more."

"How?"

"By coming back very soon."

"That I can readily promise. I shall soon get tired of my change without you."

And the carriage driving up at this moment, Madeleine kissed him tenderly, and let him go.

It did strike her as rather odd, when she sat down to reflect, that her father should have decided upon this journey so hastily, and also that he had not proposed taking her with him, seeing that she would be left quite alone.

But she had taught herself to believe that everything he did must needs be right; and she had too much confidence in him to pry into his motives.

She should miss him dreadfully, he was such a wise and pleasant companion; but the days would soon pass, and then there would be the pleasure of welcoming him home.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 3.)

☞ A mouse in Cleveland, Ohio, chewed up two hundred dollars in greenbacks, and was afterward found dead in its nest surrounded by shreds of the notes. It is supposed the coloring matter on the notes did not agree with the animal.

WINETTE'S PLOT.

BY MRS. ELIZA E. ANTHONY.

Time, seven o'clock, of a sultry evening.

Place, Squire Fay's parlor, which, with its cool matting, light bamboo furniture, and filmy lace-curtains, swinging in the evening breeze, seemed the pleasantest nook imaginable.

Propria persona—Squire Fay, a short, burly figure, with gray whiskers, which he was gnawing impatiently, while looking sternly at his motherless, self-willed daughter, dainty Winette Fay, a plump little maiden of seventeen summers, with sparkling black eyes, which could either flash with scorn, or melt in tears, according to her mood.

Her short, jetty hair clustered in curls all over her head, while her rounded cheeks and pouting lips, rivalled the rose in hue. Taken all together, as she stood nervously tapping the floor with her tiny bronze gaiter, her neat linen suit falling in graceful folds about her, she looked tempting enough for any man to fall in love with.

"Now, Winette, *do* act sensibly," began Squire Fay. "Why most girls would be perfectly delighted, to have such an honor offered them as you have."

"I don't see where the honor is, compelling me to marry an old dotard," flashed Winette.

"If ever I was tempted to shake you, I am *now*, you saucy elf. Mr. Griffin is only fifty years of age—and bears his years remarkably well—"

"Yes, with the aid of paint, powder, hair-dye and padding," interrupted Winette, saucily.

"Winette Fay, if you interrupt me again, I'll—I'll—I'll lock you in your room for a week;" stormed the Squire.

"That would just suit me, sir—as then I would not have to entertain Mr. Griffin—very appropriate name. But proceed, father mine, and let me hear all of his perfections," replied Winette, very soberly, though her eyes sparkled with fun.

The Squire cleared his throat, struck an attitude, and commenced—

"Mr. Griffin is very wealthy, and considered very stingy by some people; but I am sure that he would give you everything you wished for—"

"If I wished for the moon, do you think he would get it for me?" asked Winette, very demurely.

"Winette, *have* you lost your senses? I pity the man that *does* get you—for you will certainly drive him crazy," fumed the Squire.

"Vane Carlisle would go crazy, if he did *not* get me," said Winette, boldly.

"Eh? What? Vane Carlisle? Why he is only a poor country doctor; and can hardly support himself, without thinking of a wife. No, indeed, miss; Vane Carlisle shall never marry you. Never mind, (seeing Winette was going to speak,) I will finish now about Mr. Griffin; he is very moral, and attends church three times every Sunday."

"He must be a great sinner," said Winette, in a low voice.

"And he is very reserved in his manners; he does not like to see any one as active and lively as you are; so moderate your spirits, my dear, while he is here, and be very ladylike and quiet."

"Oh, my gracious!" ejaculated Winette, in horror.

"I know it will be difficult for you, but you will gain a wealthy husband by it. He has been married twice, I will admit, but of course, that does not concern you."

"Oh, of course not," echoed Winette, sarcastically.

"As his wives have been dead five years or more."

"Did they both die at the same time?" wickedly asked Winette.

"Of course not, you goose; but you will be the third one;" calmly replied her father.

"I don't wonder they died, having to live with a Griffin, and become quiet, reserved and ladylike. I expect they thought it would be better 'to shuffle off this mortal coil,' than live with him. Their last act was the most sensible one of their lives," flashed Winette, unmindful of her father's horrified look.

"Winette Fay, you are lost to all sense of shame. Such language, such expressions I never heard before. It will be a good thing for you, when you are married, and have to become sober and sedate. But hark! I hear the stage now; and Mr. Griffin will be here in five minutes; so go to your room and prepare yourself for supper."

"Prepare myself? Am I going to be eaten for supper, papa?" asked Winette, laughingly, as she tripped up-stairs and entered a cosey room, which appeared to be full of swaying white curtains, and rose-colored ribbons.

Instead of changing her dress, Winette threw a veil over her curls, and gliding lightly down the back stairs, opened the door softly—and after casting a hasty glance around to see if she was unobserved, ran down the shady lane, and almost into the arms of a handsome young gentleman, who seemed willing enough to hold her; and Winette, instead of objecting to the kisses he showered upon her coral lips, rather seemed to enjoy them, as the usual phrases enjoyed by lovers were interchanged.

"Now, Vane, I have only a few moments to spare; and first, I will tell you, that I am engaged to be married;" said Winette, wickedly; then as she saw the pallor of his face, added, "Or rather, father says I am to be the third wife of Mr. Griffin, and be so ladylike, as to glide into my grave as soon after as is convenient; but, Vane, I will never marry any one except you; that is, if you want me."

"But, my darling, promise me that you will never yield to them; consent to be mine, and we will be married in spite of all the Griffins in the world;" Vane Carlisle passionately exclaimed, pressing Winette to his heart, and she, the little witch, did not object, but nestled her curly head contentedly on his shoulder.

She was silent for about two minutes, then said, smilingly, "Vane, I have a plot by which Mr. Griffin, much as he now wishes me, will give me up in less than a week, and that of his own free will and accord. Listen, while I tell you." What it was, we will leave the reader to find out, and judging from the quizzical look in Vane's face, when, after a lingering kiss, Winette hastened home, it was likely to prove satisfactory to all concerned.

As Winette passed the parlor, the door of which was closed, she heard voices, which assured her that the expected guest had arrived, and hastily entering her room, she proceeded to "prepare" herself for supper. Throwing off her dainty linen suit, Winette put on a faded fawn-colored merino, scanty and destitute of trimming, with a train a yard long. A prim-looking collar, confined by a small jet pin, and severe-looking cuffs completed her attire. By the liberal use of pomade, she plastered her curls stiffly down on her forehead, and wound it into an old-fashioned twist behind. She also took her rings off her fingers, and her pretty coral ear-drops out of her delicate ears. Not a flower or ribbon relieved the severe simplicity of her attire, which made her look, as she said with a grimace, "Like a ghost: and if Mr. Griffin admires ladylike, quiet and plain people, he shall have his wish to-night. But, oh, wouldn't I like Vane to see me now? His eyes would start out of his head in astonishment, and I expect father will think I am crazy; but I am only following his advice. I must practice my courtesy before the mirror. there, that will do, now for fun;" and carrying one of her father's large handkerchiefs by the centre, and with her arch face drawn as solemn as possible, Winette walked very slowly down-stairs, and into the parlor, and stood before her father, while Mr. Griffin, a painted, powdered and stuffed personage, looked up in astonishment as she glided so solemnly into the room.

Squire Fay looked up, his eyes opening to their full extent as he saw Winette before him with her hair plastered down, and her scant dress. Then, with a—"What the mischief—" he rose, and introduced her as "My daughter Winette, Mr. Griffin."

Mr. Griffin arose, placed his hand on his heart, or where it was supposed to be and bowed; while Winette shook out her handkerchief, dropped a stiff little courtesy, and walked slowly to the hardest chair she could find, where she sat bolt upright, with her eyes cast down to the floor, until supper was announced, when, placing the tips of her fingers on Mr. Griffin's arm, she marched into the dining-room. No need to describe the supper; suffice it to say, Winette did not raise her eyes off her plate, and only replied in monosyllables when addressed by Mr. Griffin, who gazed at her between each mouthful.

After supper, they adjourned to the parlor, where Winette sat erect and silent on the sofa, with Mr. Griffin at her side; while Squire Fay took his comfort in an easy-chair by the window, content to let Mr. Griffin do his own wooing, and wondering what under the sun possessed Winette to dress and act so outrageously; but as no one could ever account for her fancies, he soon ceased wondering.

"I must confess I was agreeably surprised when I saw you this evening, Miss Winette, I had expected to see a lively romping school-girl, but instead, I found a modest, quiet, young lady," said Mr. Griffin.

"Good heavens!" thought Winette; but she only said, "Do you not like energetic people, Mr. Griffin?"

"No, my dear young lady; I prefer everybody and everything quiet around me, and if you could—"

"Gracious! it's coming," thought she, in dismay; but his next words reassured her, "sing and play me something soothing on the piano, I would be very much delighted."

Winette meekly arose, and going to the piano, sang "Nelly Gray," and "When You and I Were Young" in a clear, sweet voice; then arose, and after dropping a prim little courtesy to Mr. Griffin and kissing her father, walked slowly up-stairs and into her room, where, after fastening the door, and horrible to relate, lifting her train, she danced around the room until she was out of breath; then, throwing herself upon a low chair, laughed until the tears rolled down her cheeks. "Oh! oh! wasn't it too good for anything to hear that old idiot talk to-night. I thought I should die laughing when I saw papa's face. A thunder-cloud was nowhere; and I had to look so prim and precise, when I was nearly choking with laughter. The Griffin is delighted with me to-night, and thinks I will be a very obedient slave—bah! But to-morrow I will raise the hair off his head with horror;" and she went off into fresh paroxysms of laughter.

While in the parlor, Mr. Griffin was calmly saying to Squire Fay, "Your charming daughter is a perfect lady; but I would prefer, ahem! don't get offended, Squire, but I wish she had a very little more energy and life; she need not be afraid of me, for you know my intentions are to win her love and marry her, with your consent, of course. She shall have all her heart can wish for; but I see her ideas on dress are not extravagant, and I am assured she will prove an obedient, loving wife."

Squire Fay could hardly resist smiling as he thought of saucy, self-willed Winette being obedient, but only observed—

"Winette has had her own way so long, Mr. Griffin, that it will be difficult for her, at first, to obey; but you must be gentle with her, and not too strict, as it is far easier to coax than to drive her; but you have my consent to woo and win her if you can."

And rising, he preceded Mr. Griffin to his chamber; then he knocked at Winette's door, which was quickly opened, and Winette, smiling saucily, stood before him.

"Has the Griffin retired yet, papa?" she asked.

"Hush, Winette, and *do* show a little more respect toward your intended husband," said the Squire, rebukingly.

"Intended fiddlesticks," quoth she; "but was I not quiet and reserved this evening?"

"Yes, a little too much so; and in the morning do put on a more becoming dress than you did to-night; you looked like a fright. And, by the by, Mr. Griffin is delighted with you, but said he would like it if you would act a little more energetic."

"First, his lordship wishes me to be quiet and prim, and then he turns quite around and wishes me to become lively, and so forth. Well, I will be energetic enough to-morrow for him; and can I dress to suit myself, papa?" Winette asked, winding her arms around his neck.

"Yes, yes, you witch, and make yourself as pretty as possible, although that would not be difficult to do," said the Squire as he kissed her, and then bidding her good-night, retired to his room.

When Mr. Griffin was dressing the next morning, he heard some one running noisily down-stairs and whistling, "Up in a Balloon, Boys." Wondering who it was, he walked slowly down to the dining-room, where he found Squire Fay awaiting him. Just as he entered the room, Winette Fay came rushing through the French window, and grasping his hand, shook it until it ached, saying, in a loud voice, "Hello Griffin, how are you getting along?"

Mr. Griffin stood as if transfixed, and a greater contrast to the prim figure of the night before could not be found.

Winette wore a short green cambric dress, covered with ruffles and puffs, which came nearly to the top of her tiny gaiters, with short sleeves and half-low corsage, displaying her dimpled arms and shoulders. A huge jet chain, heavy enough for a dog collar, hung around her snowy neck. In her ears were long jet ear-rings, almost touching her shoulders, and her taper fingers were covered with rings. Her jetty hair was parted on the side, and curled bewitchingly all over her head, while her large eyes shone like stars.

"Wha-wha-what did you say?" stammered Mr. Griffin.

"I didn't say—I only asked you how you were getting along; but come, let us have some breakfast, Griffin," said Winette, as they sat down to the table. Her eyes were not cast-down now, but flashing in every direction, and she chattered like a magpie, while Mr. Griffin and Squire Fay looked at her in amazement.

When breakfast was over, she hooked her arm into Mr. Griffin's, and leading him into the parlor, said: "Now, Griffin, I will give you a treat. Sit down on the sofa, and don't even wink, while I sing you some jolly songs;" and before he could object, she rattled off "Not for Joe," "Champagne Charlie," and like songs, finishing with, "We won't go home till morning," in truly jovial style, and then, wheeling around, Winette saucily asked, "How did you like it, Griffin?"

"I—I am surprised that you know such immoral—"

"Immoral? Why, they are all the rage; it shows that you have always been behind the age, to call those gay songs immoral; why, I blush for you," said Winette, severely, looking at his horrified face. Springing up, she waltzed around the room, and then throwing herself into an arm-chair, said serenely:

"Papa said last evening that you were going to do me the honor—'hem! of proposing for my hand—"

"What boldness!" muttered Mr. Griffin.

"Did you speak, Griffin?" she asked, sternly.

"No, no, I was only thinking," said he, hastily.

"You think rather loud then; but proceed with your wooing; we might as well settle it at once;" and she looked wickedly at Mr. Griffin, who, after wiping his flushed face, stammered forth:

"My dear, ahem! I—you astonish me—"

"Well, it's a good thing to be astonished for once in your life, so go on," said Winette, enjoying his perplexity, as he commenced:

"I am very wealthy—"

"Very kind of you to inform me," put in Winette.

"And my former wives were perfectly satisfied with my way of living; and of course you should have everything they had."

"I wonder what that consisted of," said Winette, *mitto vore.*

"We would live in the country, and go to the city once a year perhaps—"

"Oh!" groaned Winette.

"We would have a steady horse and family carriage, and occasionally go out riding, something my wives never did."

"No wonder they died," muttered Winette.

"I take a weekly paper, and you could do the same. I am proud to say no novel or story-paper ever profaned my house—"

"*Oh! oh!*" said Winette, as she thought of the piles of novels and story-papers in her room.

"What is the matter? Are you ill?" asked Mr. Griffin, in alarm.

"Nothing; proceed with your charming picture," she replied.

"I can think of nothing more; but now, Winette, if there is anything that you can suggest, pray do so, and if practicable, it shall be done;" and he smiled graciously upon her.

Winette felt like pulling his hair, as leaning back in her chair, she said, coolly:

"I can suggest a great many things. First, I have no intention whatever of living in the country; you are wealthy enough to buy a handsome house in the city and furnish it magnificently."

"Good Heaven!" groaned he.

"Then, you will also purchase one in the country, and we will come to our country-house for a few weeks during the summer, and the remainder of the year live in our city mansion or travel."

"Oh!" ejaculated Mr. Griffin.

"Then, instead of a steady horse and family carriage, we must have a span of stylish horses for the barouche, which you must purchase; a small carriage and a pair of handsome ponies for my use, three or four saddle horses—"

"Oh! *oh!*" groaned her victim.

"As I must have one, of course, and as the house will always be crowded with visitors, we must have a few for their convenience. Our bridal tour must be to Europe—"

"Heavens above!" moaned he.

"Where we will travel a year or two; then returning, we will give a grand ball—"

"Never!" said he, faintly.

"What did you say, Griffin?" asked Winette, severely.

"I—I don't approve of balls," he ventured, timidly.

"That does not make any difference; I do, and could dance all night. We will fill the house with novels and story-papers—"

"Heaven forbid!"

"As I could not live without something to read; and I must have everything I wish for, because—I tell you this in confidence—I have a terrible temper when I am opposed; and there is no telling what I might do in my anger. So, you see, I am dangerous," said Winette so sharply, that Mr. Griffin nearly sprang out of his chair, then tremblingly said:

"Win—Winette—"

"Miss Fay," snapped she.

"Miss Fay, I mean, you must—I—"

"Can't you talk sensibly for *once* in your life?" she asked, sarcastically.

Mr. Griffin looked everywhere but at her, then said, timidly:

"I am afraid I won't do for you, Miss Fay; I am too old for your youthful spirits—"

"Have you just found it out?" she queried.

"And will therefore decline the honor of your hand."

"How *dare* your insult me in that manner by offering to marry me, and then declining the honor of my hand," Winette stormed, shaking her tiny fist at him, though inwardly delighted at the success of her plot.

Mr. Griffin fairly shook in his chair. Thinking that she might be getting dangerous, he soothingly said,

"Really, Miss Fay, I did not mean—"

"Why did you say it, then, you hypocrite!" she demanded, her eyes flashing fire.

"I—I did not intend to insult you, but you are too lively Ah! don't touch me!" shrinking in his seat, as Winette rose with clenched fist, and took a step toward him.

"Touch *you!* I wouldn't touch you with the tongs!" she said, scornfully; then added: "But I will be silent, and will not expose you, if you will promise me to decline my hand, in proper terms, to my father; and I suppose you will not care to prolong your visit after this scene."

"Yes, my d——, I mean Miss Fay, I will smooth matters with your father, and before night will be very far away," said Mr. Griffin, rising, and edging toward the door; then, turning, he fairly ran up into his room, and locked himself in.

Winette fairly shrieked with laughter 'Oh! what a splendid actress I should make. What sport it was to see the Griffin tremble, because he thought I was dangerous. I shall have no more trouble with him, and my plot has succeeded. He thought the houses, carriages, novels, balls, European trip, and, above all, my temper, a rather extravagant price to pay for a bride."

In about two hours Winette was roused from her favorite pursuit, reading THE POST, by a rapping at her door, and on opening it saw her father, looking very stern and angry.

"What have you been doing now, Winette?" he demanded,

"Why, papa, you speak as if I was always in mischief of some sort; but I have not stepped on the cat, broken any dishes, or torn my dress for a week," Winette said, trying to pout, though nearly choking with laughter.

"Pshaw! don't talk foolishly; but I have something to say which will surprise you. Mr. Griffin has just left for home, and—Winette, now don't faint—the old blockhead said he really could not think of marrying you: that you were too young and lively for him, and he hurriedly bade me farewell. Confound him! To think that *my* daughter should be coolly cast aside, because a numskull like him could not appreciate her," stormed the Squire.

Winette, the little hypocrite, said, mournfully:

"Yes, and he will tell everybody that I am so lively, and have such a temper, that nobody will marry me, and so I will have to be an old maid—all on account of—a—Griffin," and Winette sobbed so piteously, that the Squire roared:

"No, indeed, you won't. Didn't you say that Vane Carlisle loved you, and wanted to marry you?"

"Y-e-s," sobbed Winette.

"Do you still wish to marry him?" asked the Squire.

"Y-e-s, s-i-r," came very faintly from Winette.

"Then you can tell him that he can have you, with my free consent, if he will not take you away from me. This house is large enough for us all; so the sooner the better, and the Griffin can find some faded, antiquated specimen for his third wife, eh, Winette?" said the Squire. Then, as Winette threw her white arms around his neck, and left sweet kisses on his bearded cheek, he drew his hand across his eyes to hide their moisture, and saying: "There, darling, Vane will want all you can spare," he went down the stairs, leaving Winette the happiest little maiden imaginable.

In less than a month there was a grand wedding at the residence of Squire Fay, at which Vane Carlisle, handsome and proud, and bonny Winette Fay, in her bridal robes of snowy lace, with a wreath of orange-blossoms crowning her jetty curls, were the principal objects of interest to the admiring spectators; and Squire Fay was so happy, that he forgot his dignity so far in the evening as to find a partner, and actually danced in the same quadrille with Mr. and Mrs. Vane Carlisle.

When Mr. Griffin read the notice of Winette's marriage, he rolled up his eyes, and said—

"I pity the man that has married her. Ugh! I am thankful that I did not get her, for she would have frightened me into my grave before this."

Winette did not tell the Squire how she had alarmed Mr. Griffin, until he danced a miniature Winette on his knee; and they were all so contented and happy that her plot was an entire success.

☞ "So yer mother's dead, is she?" inquired a bootblack yesterday of a rather solemn-faced lad, who had come back with his "kit" after an absence of a day or two. "Yes, she is," replied the boy, and then, straightening himself up, he continued, "And dad did the fair thing by her—seven more hacks than Mrs. —— had the other day."

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PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, OCT. 25, 1873.

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LETTERS FROM ZIG.

AN OLD QUESTION.

In my day, there was one particular question which went the rounds of half the country debating-societies in Christendom. It was clawed at, and hummed and hammered over, and rolled up thick and beaten out thin, and then taken up and argued all over again. It was the mighty question: Which is harder to bear, physical pain or mental pain? The contending forces were all young people, in the blessed days of goslinghood, consequently, however long the proposition was argued, the same side always won the victory. These grave and wise young people, I remember, invariably decided that mental pain was harder—oh! yes, unspeakably harder to bear than physical pain. Young people are as sure to be spooney and romantic as the Johnny-jump-ups are to sprout in the spring. And mental pain is so much nicer and nobler than vulgar physical pain. A heart-ache is vastly more romantic than a stomach-ache.

So the question was always carried on the side of the mental-pain people. And much we young dunces knew about pain of any sort in those days! One of the victorious leading champions of the undying agony of mental pain was a great fat boy, I remember, who usually dropped to sleep in the midst of the debate, and snored like a steamboat. He used to tell us how Marie Antoinette's hair grew white from trouble, during her imprisonment, and how the King of England never smiled again. Well, bless the boy!—he afterward went into the butcher business, and did well. He has a thriving trade, and devours tripe and sausages, at peace with all the world. He is now inclined to believe that the story about how the man's hair turned white in a single night is a lie. Another one of the famous mental-pain champions was a thin, muddy-faced young lady, of an immensely romantic turn of mind, who always prophesied of herself that she would die young, of a broken heart. She used to take in a most unholy load of pork and cabbage, and then call it heart disease. Nineteen-twentieths of all the heart disease in America is dyspepsia.

The thin, muddy-faced young lady is now a corner grocer's middle-aged wife, and heart-disease and mental pain have worn upon her so that she only weighs one hundred and ninety pounds, and looks exceedingly like a bag of meal with a string tied around the middle. My! but she is stout! I doubt very much whether any power could persuade her that the severest mental pain on earth could be compared for a moment with a good sharp twinge of rheumatism. But she and the other mental-pain advocates carried the day triumphantly every time, fifteen years ago. I argued that way too, but I didn't believe it all the time.

I knew better in my bones all the while, but you see I wanted to be romantic, too. Now since I'm older, and feel sheepish if anybody hints that I ever was romantic, I'm not afraid to say to all the world that when a person says mental pain is harder to bear than physical pain—it's my opinion that person is talking nonsense. I should think I ought to know by this time, old as I am. I'm sure I had my heart broken at least a dozen times when I was young, real howling heart-break, every time, and here I'm alive and well this day, and growing fleshier every year, please Providence! Indeed, so well over it all am I that I've forgotten the very names of the irresistible young fellows who broke my heart, but I've not forgotten the name of the dentist who pulled my teeth. Not much! And I speak with the weight of experience when I assure you that the worst possible heart-break is not worth mentioning beside the agony of a three-weeks' ague.

It is one of the kind provisions of Providence that the keenest mental distress, even grief at the loss of one's dearest friend, can't possibly last a lifetime, in its highest intensity,—that time, even when it does not heal the wound, gently binds it up, and soothes it. It would be a very sad world indeed, if it were not so. But how can the gentle hand of time help the toothache? You can live down mental pain, but you can't live down dyspepsia. On the contrary, the more you live it down the worse it gets. And how can a man be a hero when he has a raging neuralgia in the head?

Physical pain is infinitely harder to bear than mental pain. One of the most pathetic incidents in the story of men's lives, is the story of the life and death of Savonarola, the martyr. He bore the scorn, slanders and insane rage of a whole populace with dauntless courage. He declared himself over and over again as ready to die for the faith he held. He must have been infinitely brave in moral courage. He was not afraid of death, but the horrid torture of the inquisition was more than his delicate nerves could bear. When they racked him on the wheel for God's sake, and put him to tortures which you can scarcely read of without shrieking out, it is enough to make one weep to know that at length, all bleeding and mangled, he groaned out:

"It is enough. Cease your tortures! I will say what you wish."

Death was not hard, but the horrible pain of torture was too much for his keen, fine-strung nerves. It is awful to think what he must have endured before those words were wrung from him. A prize-fighter would probably have endured the tortures without flinching. It is no proof of cowardice that Savonarola succumbed to the frightful pain at last. It is only a proof of the frightful pain.

For myself, I'm a miserable coward. I could die, but I can't bear toothache. Intense physical pain somehow pierces through the life of one so, and tears his very heart-strings apart. And the fact that a man can have his doubleat tooth pulled out, or his arm sawed off, without so much as giving a groan or turning pale, doesn't at all prove to my mind that he is a brave man. In general it would be more apt to prove that he was rather stupid, with thick, blunt nerves, a kind of chuckle-head, you know, who endured pain because he was too thick-skinned to feel it.

Mental distress never hinders one from achieving great things in the world. It is only miserable physical pain and weakness which tie the hands and clog the feet and hold a mortal down to the earth when he would bound upward. However powerful one's grief over anything may be, he can still go his rounds and do his daily work in the world, but weary, wasting days of physical pain, when one lies helpless and hopeless, are so many days blotted out of his existence.

Pain hurts. ZIG.

HOME AND SOCIETY.

BORROWERS.

There is no greater pest in a neighborhood than an habitual borrower, and it is a practice which should be severely discountenanced, as it renders a person exceedingly obnoxious.

To be sure there are occasions when to borrow is allowable, and every one recognizes the convenience of possessing neighborly friends who are willing to lend in times of sickness, death, etc. But habitual borrowers are persons who endeavor daily or weekly to obtain the use of other people's property, and thus avoid the necessity of purchasing needful household articles or utensils, and sometimes even resort to this artifice to supply the wants of their table.

They are usually of too indifferent, or too indolent a temperament to take proper care of what they borrow, or even to return it when they have done with it.

Therefore, it is exceedingly annoying to those who pride themselves upon their household utensils, and always possess those of the best make, and who endeavor to have them properly cared for, to lend their belongings to these contemptible characters, knowing that they will not receive proper care or be returned punctually.

We know of ladies who being thus situated were really obliged to purchase two sets of various utensils, one for home use and one to lend to neigbors; because if they refused to oblige them, they would surely be stigmatized as "mean, niggardly and unaccommodating."

Now these things ought not to be allowed in a community. For it costs Mrs. Allright no more to purchase flat-irons, preserving-kettle, standard weights, apple parer and corer, fluting iron, soap kettle, etc., etc., than it does me; yet daily or weekly she prefers to borrow mine, than to own the needful articles.

Then it is far easier for her to borrow "a drawing of tea"—(which means a coffeecupful); a pat of butter; a tumblerful of vinegar; a little sugar and spices; a half a dozen of eggs; and a quart of flour; than to send down town and purchase them. And Mrs. Allright knows also, by long experience, that it is far more economical—because she never remembers to return any of the condiments borrowed from my stores. Mere trifles are they in her estimation—not worthy of a thought.

Yet Mrs. Allright can purchase herself a black-silk suit yearly on the pickings and stealings from my yearly expenses. Not that she would acknowledge the fact, or even give it a shadow of credence, but monthly accounts do not deceive one when they are properly kept; and when her house was closed for a six weeks one summer, my account-book could testify to the fact.

Some one may ask—

"Why do you submit to such depredations?"

"Ah! yes; why do I?"

Because our husbands were school-boys together, and intimate friends—and are so still; and then we do hate dissensions, and love peace, and therefore must pay the cost of it.

And Mr. Allright could hardly be made to believe that the "mere trifles" borrowed from us could amount to even five dollars a year, while the idea of twenty times five would shock him severely.

So we strive to bear and forbear, and possess our souls in peace and quiet. But if this article should meet Mrs. Allright's eyes, she would never dream that she had sat for her portrait.

No, indeed, that would be the last idea that would enter her head, but she would say in her sententious way—

"Yes, borrowers are a great nuisance, and therefore I make it a point never to lend;" utterly oblivions of the constant demands made by her servants upon me.

Sometimes I have thought it might be the servants' fault; but when she has made an entire change in her domestic arrangements, the borrowing continues quite as frequent as before, showing that it was not done without the mistress's knowledge.

It seems to me that it is most desirable that housekeepers should give their servants strict commands not to borrow; but when an article is used up, to give information of the fact to the higher power, and then its place should be supplied directly.

And when the grocer's boy calls daily for orders, as is the practice in large towns, there is no excuse for pilfering upon your neighbors. Mrs. Allright delights to tell with what economy she conducts her household affairs, and how small are her weekly expenditures, and gives an account of how many pounds of sugar, tea, coffee, butter, etc., etc., are used at her table, but without the slightest reference to her habitual practice of supplying deficiencies from her neighbors' resources.

Complaints of borrowers are rife in almost every community, and one listens to very strange stories concerning their performances.

One lady relates that a neighbor sent to borrow a new street suit which had never been worn. She only desired to look at it for a moment. When returned, the bottom of the dress showed that it had been trailed in the dust, and our friend discovered that her elegant suit had been worn by the neighbor to exhibit it to her dressmaker, and that she had ordered one exactly like it!

Such instances exceed belief, and yet their truth cannot be doubted. So, let us make a resolve never to borrow excepting under extreme circumstances, and to lend as little as we can.

DAISY EYEBRIGHT.

Biographical Sketches.

WILLIAM PENN.

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

William Penn, the founder of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, was the son of Admiral Penn. Under Cromwell's Protectorate, the Admiral had made the conquest of Jamaica, but on the restoration of the Stuarts he had, without sacrifice of principle or mean cringing to the new régime, gained rather than lost by the change. He was brave, patriotic, quick-tempered, and not without a large share of family pride. He won knighthood, honor and court influence through his services at sea. His wife was Margaret Jasper, the daughter of a Rotterdam merchant. She is said to have been an excellent woman, a faithful wife, and a judiciously indulgent mother.

The Admiral, Sir William Penn, had two sons, William and Richard, and one daughter, Margaret, who married Anthony Lowther, of Mask, Yorkshire.

William, the elder son and future proprietary of the province of Pennsylvania, was born in St. Catharine's Parish, Tower Hill, London, October 14, 1644. His parents having a country residence at Wanstead, he was sent to the free grammar school at Chigwell, Essex. At the age of twelve he was removed from Chigwell and sent to a better school, having at the same time the advantage of a private tutor at home. His works, mostly polemical, give proof that the care taken in his education was not wasted. Though in boyhood he indulged in the usual sports and amusements appropriate to that time of life, yet even then he occupied himself in those spiritual exercises which afterward influenced him to join the followers of George Fox.

At the age of fifteen he was entered at Oxford as a gentleman commoner. Among his companions at the University was the celebrated John Locke, author of the *Essay on the Human Mind.*

The religious impressions of the young student were deepened by the exhortations of Thomas Loe, a former member of the University, but who had left it to join the Society of Friends; he occasionally visited it, however, and succeeded in gaining the attention of Penn and several other students. This small band of dissenters deserted the worship conducted according to the Episcopal rites, and held more congenial services in their own rooms. Though fined for this as nonconformants, they grew bolder, and when their fellow-students appeared wearing surplices, they rushed upon the gownsmen and tore off the obnoxious robes. The zealous offenders were at once expelled.

When William returned home in disgrace, he met with a warm reception from the Admiral—a reception which doubtless put his recently-acquired meekness to the test. The angry seaman, finding that words were not sufficiently expressive, proceeded to blows, and drove his son from the house; but the Admiral's indignation did not last long. He soon recalled his son, and determined to send him to France as the best means of dissipating his gravity of mind and demeanor, which in the court of the "merry monarch" would certainly be no passport to favor.

This journey to France was not without effect. It did not alter the young man's principles, though his life in Paris gave his manners a polish and liveliness they did not before possess. Under date of August 26, 1664, that veteran gossip, Mr. Pepys, enters in his diary, that "Mr. Penn, Sir William's son, is come back from France, and come to visit my wife; a most modish person, grown, she says, a fine gentleman."

Penn began his law studies, in compliance with his father's wish, at Lincoln's Inn; his studies were, however, not long continued, for the advent of the great plague of 1665, induced him to leave London.

The Quakers, variously called Professors, Children of the Light, and Friends, were regarded with favor neither by the members of the Established Church, nor by the other dissenters. His father sent him to Ireland, in the hope of eradicating his obnoxious tendency toward the doctrine of the Friends. In vain. The dissipation at the gay court of the Lord-Lieutenant, disgusted, instead of attracting him; and though he did not assume the garb of the Society, he began to attend its meetings. At last he and the Admiral came to another open rupture. Sir William offered to give his son no further trouble, if he would consent to remove his hat in his presence and in the presence of the King, and the Duke of York.

Before giving an answer, Penn retired to his chamber to consider the matter. Believing that he could not consistently with his duty comply, he firmly but respectfully communicated his decision to the Admiral. The indignant father turned him out of doors. His mother supplied his wants until a partial reconciliation was effected.

In the year 1668, Penn made his first appearance as an author. The title of his first tract would hardly "take" in these days, when brevity is regarded as not only the soul of wit, but very often as wit itself, soul and body. This is the title in full—"Truth exalted; in a short but sure testimony against all those religious Faiths and Worships, that have been formed and followed in the darkness of Apostasy; and for that glorious Light, which is now risen, and shines forth in the Life and Doctrines of the despised Quakers, as the alone good old Way of Life and Salvation. Presented to Princes, Priests and People, that they may repent, believe and obey. By William Penn, whom Divine Love constrains in an holy Contempt, to trample on Egypt's glory, not fearing the King's Wrath, having beheld the Majesty of Him who is invisible." "Truth exalted, *&c.,*" was followed by many controversial works.

In 1670, Penn was arrested while preaching in London, by virtue of the Conventicle Act, which rendered penal all meetings of dissenters for worship. He was released from Newgate just in time to comfort the last days of the Admiral.

In his twenty-eighth year, he married Gulielma Maria Springett, who was his loving and beloved helpmate for twenty-two years. After her death, he married Hannah Callowhill, who had been educated in the belief of the Friends.

The idea of providing a refuge in the New World for his persecuted co-religionists had entered Penn's mind, and in 1680, while engaged in settling his father's estate, he petitioned King Charles for a grant of land in America in payment of the sixteen thousand pounds which the Crown owed to the deceased Admiral. A charter vesting the perpetual proprietorship of certain territory in William Penn and his heirs was granted. Penn wished to call his new territory *New Wales*, but the Under-Secretary objected to this. Penn then suggested *Sylvania*, in allusion to the forests, and the secretary prefixed *Penn*. It was now the modest Quaker's turn to object, but the secretary persisted. The matter was referred to the king, who named the province Pennsylvania, in honor of the old admiral.

In 1682, Penn embarked in the ship Welcome for his colony. He arrived on the 27th of October, and held the first Assembly in Upland, now Chester. Penn had several peaceful conferences with the Indians, characterized by fairness and justice. The Great Treaty held under the large elm tree at Shackamaxon was "never sworn to, and never broken." He selected the site of Philadelphia—the almost unsurpassed geographical advantages of which city prove his far-seeing wisdom. While Philadelphia stands, Penn needs no other monument. We have not space to particularize the political bickerings which at times distracted the colony; but, in spite of these, it prospered under the rule of its founder. At the time of his death—which occurred on the 30th of July, 1718—the province contained sixty thousand inhabitants, and the eighty dwellings of 1682 had increased to fourteen hundred.

JUST A LITTLE WINE.

BY DAISY BURNS.

The house was brilliantly lighted, and splendidly-dressed ladies and gentlemen flitted to and fro. It was a wedding. Pretty Lulu May had just given her hand and heart to the noble-looking groom, Victor Vivian, and they were a handsome couple. But it is of a scene at supper I would speak. The guests were gathered around the table, covered, as it was, with every luscious dish one's taste could desire, and after a time wine was handed. All drank heartily, wishing the bride long life and much happiness, save the groom. When the wine was handed him, he only shook his head, and said, "Not any."

"Not any!" exclaimed several voices.

"Why, Victor?" said one; "surely you will drink your wife's health, and wish her a long life and much happiness?"

"Of course," he replied, "I wish her such, but I have yet to taste wine; never a drop has touched my lips, and I am now twenty-four."

"Then, Victor," said the bride, "let the first taste come from your wife," handing him a glass. "Surely you will not refuse so slight a request from me," as he again shook his head; "you know it's just a little wine."

"Lulu, I'd rather not," he said, for the image of his sainted mother arose before him, and he again heard the words, "Taste not, touch not," which she had held up before him until her death. In truth a tendency to love wine too well was in the blood of the family—and his mother knew it.

"Oh, Victor," said Lulu, "you are silly." Then, *sotto voce*, "You surely will drink to me if you love me."

That settled it. Victor took the wine, gave the toast, and drained the glass; and it was not many years before Lulu saw where she had erred. They went to themselves, and were quite happy in their little home for awhile, and Victor concluded it would be pleasant for Lulu (?) to keep wine in the house all the time, as a refreshment for visitors; and he brought a quantity to their little home. Lulu wondered how she could use wine so fast; she did not have a great deal of company. The first time she saw her husband had drunk too much she laughed, for he acted so singularly, but the sixth, eighth, dozenth time did she laugh? Ah, no. And Lulu lived to see the day that she repented of that first taste of wine.

When Victor found he loved it, he indulged on every occasion, until he formed a habit; now he is bound in chains, and is too weak to break them; and Lulu, the bright, charming Lulu is a drunkard's wife.

[From the *Sun*, Jasper, Tenn.]

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST continues to deserve the reputation it has had for over half a century. For purity of language and intricate plot its stories never have, nor ever can be excelled.

CHRISTABEL.

BY SADIE BEATTY.

The far-off waves swept up the horizon's brim,
And struggling with each other sought the shore;
There breaking with a murmuring wild and grim,
That seemed a voice repeating "nevermore."
The sea-birds hurrying to their wave-rocked home,
Caught up the drear refrain and told it o'er;
The winds that swayed the forest's dark-browed dome,
Took in the minor tone amid their roar,
Till from the heights of earth to ocean's core,
The sad, sad wail resounded, "never, nevermore."

Beside the sea a youth and maiden strayed,
And watched the surging billows rise and lower;
A solemn hush on each young brow was laid,
For this wild eventide was their parting hour.
She with her eyes of blue and golden hair,
And rare, sweet face, like some home-sheltered flower;
He with the daring look that brave men wear,
Who ne'er at danger's menace shrink or cower,
Heart beat to heart, each felt the other's power;
Alas! that grief alone should be their dower.

He paused, and bending to her yet more near,
Said, "Time is gliding from me, Christabel,
I must away though love enchains me here,
Kiss me once more, and then the last farewell!"
"And then must go to regions far, Jerome?
Oh, bitter grief no earthly hand can quell!
May angels watch thee from their starlit home,
And keep thee 'neath their heaven-appointed spell;
Be mine the dark, dark waiting hours to tell,
With thee may all be light, Jerome, farewell!"

He went, and night closed round her like a cloud
A low-hung cloud all pitiless and dread,
Each mounting billow seemed a sailor's shroud,
Each blast of wind a requiem for the dead.
She knelt and prayed as one whose faith can rise
Onward and upward to the fountain head—
No answer sounded from the gray-hued skies,
And yet her weary heart was comforted;
God spake to her as in the days long fled—
Peace, troubled soul, lean thou on me instead!

Swiftly the days of absence glided by,
And white-winged missives came her eyes to cheer;
One said, at last, "the meeting-hour is nigh,
Watch for me now for I shall soon be here."
Patient to wait until the time came round,
As patiently she watched without a fear;
Though months went by unstirred by sight or sound,
And others shook their heads with whispers drear,
She could not think the treacherous waves would rear
Their yawning mouths to swallow all most dear.

Watching, when morn in youthful beauty rose,
And the glad sunbeams with the waters played;
Watching amid the noontide's hushed repose,
Or when the evening light on earth was laid;
And when the night rose with her jewelled crown,
Proud that her richest gems were thus displayed,
And the young tender moon looked softly down
On the dark rocks in mystic dress arrayed;
Still, still beside the sea she watching strayed,
And wondered why his coming was delayed.

Oh, patient faith, that stayed though years passed on,
And never whitening sail to harbor came;
Oh, heart, that hoped when hope itself was gone,
And the dark tide of time had quenched youth's flame!
The mighty caverns kept their secret well;
Death in his fearful course took certain aim,
And not one soul was left the tale to tell
Of how the billows played their maddening game;
Still by the sea she waited on the same,
Saying, "Jerome will come my love to claim."

White grew the golden hair that he caressed,
Faded the eyes of blue so bright before,
Wrinkled the brow where his last kiss was pressed,
Low bowed the form beneath the load it bore.
Then God in pity took her to his home,
The happy home where ransomed spirits soar;
There her last words, "I come to thee, Jerome,
Ah, *thou* hast waited on the other shore."
At last the nevermore of earth is o'er,
And she has found the heavenly evermore!

OBSERVATIONS.

BY MAX ADELER.

[Editors will please bear in mind that the following Observations by Max Adeler, in common with the other original contents of THE POST, are copyrighted. We give this notice on account of the constant "appropriation" of Max Adeler's articles, without the requisite credit being given either to the writer or the paper.—*Ed. Sat. Eve. Post.*]

—Mrs. Gunn, the other day, was telling her little son, Adolph, the story of Joseph and his brethren: and when she had described the meeting between them after Joseph had become a great lord in Egypt, and told how he embraced his brothers and kissed them, she said: "And now, Adolph, my child, wouldn't you have liked to have been there to have witnessed that beautiful scene? Think, my dear boy, of how Joseph must have looked, so full of joy and happiness, and how glad his brothers must have been to see him such a great man. It must have been a very happy scene, and I am sure, Adolph, that you wish you could have been there to witness it."

ADOLPH.—"I say, ma, I can't ever see it, can I?"

MRS. GUNN.—"No, my dear, of course not."

ADOLPH.—"And I can't ever see any of those things mentioned in the Bible, can I, ma?"

MRS. GUNN.—"Certainly not, my child. Why do you ask such questions?"

ADOLPH—"Why, because if I could see any of them, ma, I'd just want a chance to go in and get a look at them bustin' old lions that wanted to chaw up Daniel."

Then Adolph went all of a sudden to bed.

—Busby spent the summer with us out at Slaymaker's on the Schuylkill above Manayunk. One afternoon he concluded to take a bath. He got Slaymaker's boat and rowed over the river so that he could go in under the trees in the shade, and he put his clothes in the boat in order to keep them out of the dirt. He paddled around in near shore for awhile, enjoying himself, and then he came out under a bush and spent some moments examining a mud turtle that he found roaming about. Then he thought he would dress and go home. When he got to the water he was astounded to find that the boat was gone. He caught sight of it whirling swiftly toward the dam. The situation was a horrible one. There was no other boat near, there was no bridge anywhere about and Busby could not swim. And while he stood there guessing what he had better do, the flies and gnats began to bite him in the most vicious manner. Passenger trains also commenced to dash by full of people, on both sides of the river; and Sunday-school picnics, composed chiefly of girls, suddenly swarmed about the place. Busby had to keep under water nearly all the time, and this was the more awful because the sun-fish and eels would nibble at his toes. And the girls got thicker and thicker around the place without being aware of Busby. It seemed to him that all the Dorcas societies and Women's Rights Conventions and female boarding-schools in the Tropic of Cancer had been emptied at that particular spot on that beautiful summer day. At last the coast cleared and Busby came out and pulled up an evergreen bush which he placed in front of him, and then marched for the nearest house. He never felt so much undressed in his life. He would have bartered all his wealth for a simple pair of garters and a pocket-handkerchief. Presently he met a man who got him a horse blanket, put him in a boat and rowed him over the river. He walked solemnly up to Slaymaker's in that blanket, looking like a Pottawottomie Indian who had just buried all his relations and drank his last gallon of rum. He bathed after that in a wash-tub, and never went within a quarter of a mile of the river without a blander in each pocket and a life-preserver under his waistcoat.

—William Smoot takes the fares from the passengers upon a certain line of ferry-boats, as they go from the wharf to the vessel. The other day a woman came up to him and asked him to hold her baby a minute while she went back to look for her husband. Smoot laid the baby on the ground in a comfortable position, and just then the husband and father came up and took the child, and started off to look for his wife. A moment after he had gone, Mrs. Smoot, with her baby, came up to ask Smoot something about dinner, and just as she started to leave, up came the woman who left her baby. She hadn't met her husband, and as she saw Mrs. Smoot it flashed upon her that that estimable woman was kidnapping the child entrusted to Smoot. Before Mrs. Smoot—(it seems to us that we are getting a great deal of Smoot into this article somehow; but it can't be helped,)—before Mrs. Smoot had gone three feet that indignant and bereaved parent made a plunge at her, and seized Mrs. Smoot's child. She strove to tear it away from Mrs. Smoot, and Mrs. Smoot, believing the woman to be a maniac, resisted desperately. At last Smoot came to the assistance of his wife, and just as he began to pull off her assailant the husband came along with the baby, and was alarmed to see a man fighting with the mother of his child. The conflict then became general, until the bystanders interfered. Then the difficulty was explained, and Smoot went back to his post. The only remarkable result that ensued was that the boat on that trip carried over as deadheads twenty-three boys who slipped on board while Smoot was in battle array. He will probably decline to watch strange babies after this.

—While Miss Gibbs was at boarding-school, her custom was to write home to her parents at least once a week. They were honest old people with plenty of sense, and not much education, and as Miss Gibbs advanced in the higher branches her letters became more and more elevated as she endeavored to explain her progress in algebra and trigonometry and kindred studies, until at last her father began to think her mind must have become slightly deranged. Unhappily the very next week after his suspicion was excited, Miss Gibbs wrote her letter just after finishing her French exercise, and in her haste she placed the exercise in the envelope and dropped it in the mail-box. When it reached home her parents were amazed to find addressed to them the following extraordinary observations.

"John, bring me my hat and cane. Jean apportez-moi mon chapeau et ma canne. Now I am ready; come, William. Me voilà prêt. Partons, Guillaume. Will you take some coffee? Veux-tu du café? Please pass me the bread. Passe-moi le pain, je vous prie. Here is my pretty little dog. Voici un joli petit chien. Come let us play in the garden. Allons jouer dans le jardin. Mary, bring the candles. Marie, apportez les chandelles. Do you take milk? Voulez-vous du lait? I have seen a little lamb. J'y ai vu un petit agneau. Is your mother at home? Ta mere est-elle a la maison? How is your sister? Comment ta sœur se porte elle?

"SARAH JANE GIBBS."

Gradually as old Gibbs read this his hair raised itself up on end, until at last when the letter was concluded, he dashed it down, and sprang up, and exclaimed "Immortal Mars! the girl is crazy. Mrs. Gibbs, that girl is a raving, staving lunatic—a wild, and awful and hopeless maniac. Pack up some things quick, and I'll go down there and find out what's the matter with her. Them boarding-schools would shatter the intellect of a rhinoceros. It's simply awful." They arrived in the morning. And when Sarah Jane came sailing down to see them, Mrs. Gibbs began to cry, and the old man sent a servant out to hunt for a doctor. The matter was finally explained; but Mr. Gibbs took her home. He said he would rather have her grow up with no more knowledge than a plug of tobacco, than to be all the time scaring her old father and mother out of their senses.

—We find in an exchange the following item, which comes very near being incomprehensible:—"Dr. Brown Sequard, who is a first-class authority, says that he has seen fifteen cases where drawing on the great toe has had a serious effect upon the brain." We are unable to understand how any one of these fifteen persons could slip his great toe off in the first place, and then we are at a loss to know why, if it didn't hurt him to slip it off, it should affect his brain by drawing it on again. It is a queer proceeding altogether. Possibly the doctor may refer to the practice of drawing *upon* the toe with a pencil. But, admitting this, we cannot conceive why any man should want to make sketches of scenery and draw portraits of his friends on his big toe, and we are equally puzzled to understand how such a proceeding could injure the brain, particularly when we reflect that anybody who was sufficiently idiotic to indulge in such foolishness could not have any brain worth speaking of.

How a Yankee Captain Sailed into Rio Janeiro.

(Brazil Correspondence of Springfield Union.)

A few days ago a most ridiculous affair happened in the harbor. An ice ship from Boston entered the bay, commanded by a Captain Green, in the South American trade. Fort Santa Cruz, not recognizing his house flag hailed him, and ordered him to "heave to." But the worthy skipper didn't speak Portuguese, and the simple statement of the name of his vessel, which he hurled at the fort, was not at all satisfactory; so a blank shot was fired as a mild suggestion for him to stop. But he called for his revolver, and, pointing it skyward, fired six successive shots.

Then a solid shot from the fort skipped across his bow, and another, better aimed, passed through his fore-sail. The fort and two shore batteries opened fire upon him, and several of his light spars were cut away. But he held on his course rejoicing, loading and firing his revolver. Finally he reached quarantine, and came to anchor just as his flying-jibboom went by the board. He was then so near the other shipping that they dared fire on him no longer, and the police-boat, the custom-house boat and the health-boat all boarded him, together with the captain of the fort, who, with more vigor than politeness, wanted to know "Why in —— he didn't heave to?" "Heave to!" ejaculated the astounded skipper, "was that what you wanted? Good Lord! I thought you was salutin' the American flag!" "Diable!" shouted the officers in chorus, and set the case down as additional evidence of the lunacy which they regarded as a necessary ingredient of the American character.

[From the *Highlander*, Harrison, Ark.]

Do you want a first-class family newspaper to help you while away the long evenings, one that makes a specialty of having something in its columns to suit the tastes of all, old and young, male and female. Then subscribe without delay for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, and our word for it, you will thank us for this bit of advice.

LOVE'S HOPE.

BY W. W. HUTCHINSON.

And have I loved in vain?
Because the chord struck in my heart
Has found no echoing strain
In yours? I say not so.
The grandest hymns that God
Has ever sung through voice of man,
By single notes in single hearts began,
And only grew to measures,
As those hearts grew strong,
Made worthy thus to sing
A God-inspired song.
So have I faith,
That though unworthiness may now
Make all the music of my love a discord seem,
And all the hopes thus born a foolish dream,
That this same love will make its temple pure,
And thus made worthy, will its end secure.
Love's perfect song,
Grown from this one imperfect strain,
Will make my life all golden
With its glad refrain.

A HIDDEN WRONG;

on,

Too Trusting and Too Fair.

BY MRS. ELIZABETH MORRISON.

CHAPTER XVI.

RALPH VELOUR'S FASCINATIONS.

The stylish-looking stranger who had expressed such soliloquized interest in Mrs. Blanchard and her establishment, proved by his silent but constant attentions to that lady's house and surroundings, that the fancy was by no means a passing one.

Daily and for hours at a time, he lingered about the neighborhood of Lexington Terrace, and endeavored, by various devices, to make speech with and gain the confidence of the Blanchard servants.

Those domestics, however, to his great annoyance proved most unsatisfactory subjects for questioning. They were few in number, and for the most part men who seemed occupied with their own business, and averse to gossipping of their employer's affairs.

A less indefatigable spy would have abandoned the field, but Mr. Velour was a gentleman whose abilities belonged mostly to that line of pursuit—and to do him justice, he exercised them fully.

One afternoon, after a wasted morning spent in the disguise of a peddler at the area door, and lurking round the back gate as a porter, the Proteus-like Velour laid aside those two of his numerous disguises and assumed the one in which we first made his acquaintance—putting on his finest garments and most stylish air for a stroll in Lexington Park.

He took a book in his hand, not that he had any delight in reading, but as a means of deceiving those who might observe him, into the belief that he sought the Park merely to read during the afternoon hours of a sunshiny winter day.

Under pretence of fixing themselves on the open page before him, his restless eyes roved over the front of the Blanchard mansion, facing which he sat, and presently they brightened with satisfaction when the hall-door opened, and a pretty, delicate-faced girl came out.

She held a greyhound by a chain, and crossing the street with her pet, entered the Park, approaching the very place where Velour sat.

The man's eyes snapped with triumphant light as she drew near, and putting the book close over his face to hide its expression of malignant satisfaction, he followed her with his evil glance till she was seated under a great bare branched tree, with her greyhound playing around her.

Then he drew near with a stealthy cat-like motion—and when close at her side, uttered a deep sigh—hearing which, the unsuspecting child started, in alarm—and looking up at him with wonder not unmixed with fear.

"Forgive me, sweet miss, if I have startled you," he said, in velvet tones; "I was thinking of a gentleman friend of mine, who owned just such a magnificent dog as yours. It was valued by the whole family, because it saved the life of an only daughter, my favorite niece, from drowning. She was the loveliest creature I ever beheld; and looking at you, the memory of her revived within me."

Here he sighed again, but very softly this time.

"This is my brother's dog," said Violet, simply; and she, too, sighed as she added, "my poor brother has gone away—and Ponto misses him, as I do."

In a moment, Velour's face assumed a score of different expressions, while the unconscious subject of his flattery and changing thoughts, continued to gaze on the ground and pat Ponto's shining head.

It was but a moment's silence that intervened, before he spoke again, but in that moment Velour had thought—

"This, then is Nina's own daughter, and she thinks the kid they stole, is her brother. He's gone off somewhere—I gathered as much from the close old waiter—and she's sorry to lose him. Humph—so far so good! I'll try my luck on this string." And he immediately changed his face and manner, to one of intense sympathy and confidence, as he began—

"My dear young lady, I did not dare to address you suddenly, lest I should cause you some alarm; but since you yourself have alluded to the subject, let me give you the satisfaction of knowing that I am your dear brother's friend. I come directly from him, and bear loving messages to you, his darling sister."

At these words, Violet clasped her hands and uttered a joyful cry.

If the wretch who stood before her, masked in deceit, had had one generous emotion left, he would have shrunk from those pure, innocent eyes, streaming with tender tears, then raised to his in eager, asking thanks.

"Oh, I am so glad, so grateful to you for coming!" she said, sobbing. "The whole world seemed empty and desolate without him, and it was so long to wait. Is he well? What message does he send me? When will he return?—and oh, may I not go and see him?" she cried, pouring her rapid questions forth with all the impetuosity of her ardent affection.

Velour had scarcely calculated on so complete and ready a success to his scheme, and at first he stammered a little in his replies; but he was too cunning not to hide his hesitation under the pretence of emotion, and having excused his first faltering accents in that way, he proceeded to tell her that her brother Eugene had found it necessary for a secret reason—that would by and by be explained to her fully—to leave home in haste and secrecy—that he was at present safe and well, but most anxious to be assured of her love and devotion to him.

Having reached this point, the man's eyes narrowed with their cunning leer; he drew still closer to the listening child, and fastened his sharp gaze upon her to read her muttered thoughts as he proceeded.

"There is something that you might do to help him, something that would be an inestimable favor to this fond brother who doted on his darling sister, from whom he is forced to be separated by a cruel fate that he is now struggling against."

"What is it?" exclaimed Violet, eagerly; "tell me what it is, and I will not fail if it be within my power."

Velour drew closer still, and his lips almost touched the girl's ear as he whispered—

"There is a locket, chased and enamelled, of a strange pattern and design. It is in your mother's possession, and holds a secret important to your brother to know. Get me this to give to him, and I—that is he—will be your debtor for life."

"Why, this must be a mistake," returned Violet, wonderingly. "He knows it is stolen; I told him so the very night we sat together last in his studio."

A half-smothered imprecation broke from the villain before he had the power to repress it. His color changed, and his brows knitted themselves together in an ugly and threatening manner.

"Impossible!" he cried, "the jade knows its value too well to risk it;" but instantly recovering his self-control, he added something about feeling his friend's interests too keenly, and entreated Violet to tell him her reasons for believing it lost.

She had drawn herself from his side at his first outbreak of temper, and now spoke in a low and rather frightened voice, recounting to him her mother's words concerning the locket.

"Eugene must have been preoccupied, not to have understood me," she said. "I told him this and more. Why did he not then say it was valuable to him?"

"You have given the true excuse for him, my dear miss," Velour said with one of his most fascinating smiles—"he was preoccupied. Meditating the flight he was obliged to keep secret, he could think of nothing else but the plan for carrying it out; in this way your important information escaped him. Alas, alas, what a dreadful disappointment is in store for my poor dear friend!"

Velour continued to bewail the absence of the locket and dwell on its intense value to Eugene, until Violet, forgetting her former fear of him, drew near again, and said it might have been found, and if it were possible to get it, she certainly should do so; and this being exactly what Velour wanted, he poured out his gratitude in an overflowing manner, and said Eugene would not be plunged in complete despair as long as that hope remained to him.

"May I not ask mamma?" Violet questioned. "Perhaps she might find it if she know how much—"

Ralph risked a reproachful look on his old knowledge of Nina's character.

"Do you think your mamma is anxious to serve your poor brother?" he asked. "Is she just or kind to him? Would he have ever left home if she had made it lovely or pleasant to him?"

"Mamma does not quite understand my brother," Violet said, reluctantly. "She must learn to love him by and by, and oh, it is the hope and desire of my life to accomplish this!" cried she, clasping her hands earnestly and looking up, as was her habit when swayed by strong feeling.

A ragged, miserable-looking boy, whose sharp face and cunning eyes were even more striking than his beggarly attire, was skulking round this pair, trying to get near enough by creeping up behind the evergreens to overhear their conversation.

As the child, glancing over toward her dwelling, seemed to indicate by her gesture that she must return to it, the man repeated his entreaties and bowed low as she left him, standing gazing after her until she disappeared within the carved-stone portal whither her gambolling hound had preceded her.

Then Velour moved briskly away, apparently well satisfied with his interview.

"For Nina can't be fool enough to have lost her *charm*," he muttered to himself as he strode off. "It's hid somewhere, and that young beauty will find it for me. I used my best powers to bend her to my will, and women do not often resist me, I flatter myself."

Hemming conceitedly he swaggered away, but little Pat, peeping out of his evergreen ambush at him, shook his small fist at the retreating figure.

"You're at your old tricks, you mean old Shiny-boots!" he soliloquized; "but I'm bound to get you into trouble and stop your wicked games. I'll tell Molly and she'll be on your track, my swell buck with flashy whiskers; she'll whale you, see if she don't. Moll ain't afraid of nothing, and you're only a sneaking old tailor's sign. I ain't forgot how you used to kick and curse me when you were down at our place long ago!"

CHAPTER XVII.

MRS. BARTON SPENDS HER HIDDEN TREASURE.

Mrs. Barton bent beneath the blow of her husband's death as if it had been entirely unlooked for, and in the first excitement of her grief would receive no consolation, nor indeed did she appear conscious of the presence of her son and daughter, who both united in their efforts to calm and comfort her.

But when an hour of passionate lamentation had passed, she roused herself from the depths of her sorrow to long for the presence of poor Lucy.

"Her dear father wanted to see her so much," she said, "he was speaking of her and telling me I must send for her when he was taken with that smothering feeling that overcame him, and he died without another word!"

"Mother," said Marian, suddenly—she had slipped away up-stairs a few moments before, and was just now returned, "mother, dear, I have sent for Lucy and she has come. Yes, she is here in the house now, but shocked and troubled as we all are at our terrible loss. Besides this," she added, looking very earnestly from her mother to her brother's face as she spoke, "she has been greatly disappointed and unkindly treated by the people with whom she has been, so it will be better for us to say nothing about her going away; it was all a sad mistake, and allusions to it will only distress her."

"My dear child," cried Mrs. Barton, "where is she! Bring her here! Oh, how thankful I am to have her with us in our deep affliction, for her father wanted her sent for, and he knew what was for the best."

Marian opened the door, and Lucy ran in and was clasped in her mother's arms; without question or cavil the poor girl was once more received at home, and Marian saw that grief and the helpless bewilderment of her loss, had quite prepared her poor mother for anything that might follow.

There was plenty to do, and Mrs. Barton, who had no capacity for management, quietly retired within her grief, and left her children to act for her.

Allan now felt himself to be the man of the family, and so was allowed to have his say, while Mrs. Barton listened to him as she had done to his father.

"Of course we must have a respectable funeral," the youth said, decidedly; "whatever privation it entails on us afterward we are bound to endure, because it is the last honor we can show our dear father."

"But where can we find the means, dear brother?" Marian asked, in a troubled tone. "You know we could scarcely get along while father lived, and now that he is gone we must do with still less than we ever had."

"We cannot show disrespect to his remains even if we are poor," persisted Allan, who never being obliged to work for the family support, knew but little about its requirements. Turning to his mother he showed the secret motive of his desire for a fine funeral, by telling her that the death would be known in the college, and at least two of the professors would attend the ceremony, accompanied by many of his class-mates.

"I hope to win a good place in the world by and by," Allan said, "it is for that I'm striving and studying, and whatever I gain shall be divided with my sisters, so that it is quite as much to their interest as to mine that we keep up a respectable appearance."

Mrs. Barton evidently sided with this view. She remained thoughtful awhile, and then asked her son in a low tone how much it would cost to carry out his plan for a proper and seemly burying.

"I have a little money put away," she said with hesitating slowness—she looked down as she spoke, and colored painfully before proceeding further. "If I have—have saved it," she continued, "no one can blame me when I use it for this sacred purpose. Carry out your idea, Allan, and see that your poor dear father's body is laid in the grave as such an honest, good man should be buried."

Having said this she burst into a fit of weeping, and Lucy, who seemed most at ease when joining in her grief, sobbed in unison with her mother.

Marian did not weep: her first tears over, she seemed to feel there were other duties more imperative than that of yielding to sorrow, so while Lucy and her mother bemoaned her father's loss, sitting side by side, and dwelling tearfully on his many virtues and perfections, she set the house in order, and made everything fitting for the funeral, which Allan ordered to be of the best in all particulars.

Fearing to risk her new patroness's anger by disappointing her, she also found time to steal unobserved away to the costumer's, and by promising to do more than usual work during the remainder of the week, gained permission to stay at home until after her poor father's burial.

"I'm sorry to hear you have trouble, my poor girl," said Madame Tinzler, "but you see in our business people bespeaking dresses for a masquerade, don't take such things into consideration. The balls are bound to come off, and they want their dresses to wear, and even if your whole family died, they would not feel like being disappointed."

"That's true," Marian answered quietly; she had lately learned too much of the world to make a parade of her sorrow, or expect sympathy from strangers. "I will be prompt on Wednesday, and try to make up by overwork the rest of the time."

She had told Lucy of her employment, and expressed her hope that it might be easy and pleasant to her, to which the poor girl answered, "it was all alike; one thing was as good as another, and she would do her best."

As Allan had expected, his classmates, mostly young gentlemen far above him in social position, came to the house of mourning, and even his professors condescended to honor the carefully arranged funeral with their presence.

Mrs. Blanchard had been there too, and Marian fancied that her sister shrank from the smooth tones of welcome the pretty lady extended to her, as if she suspected the sweet smile of greeting to be false, and saw beneath drooping eyelids a maliciously curious glance.

"I am so glad you came home, my dear," she said, "there's no place like home, particularly when one has made a mistake in going away, I mean. And how opportune it was, your arriving just when you did, your poor mother too much shaken by her grief to be surprised at anything, and Mr. Allan here entirely occupied with being the head of the family, and acting the part remarkably well, I'm sure."

Marian saw a sinister motive in all this woman said, and half suspected that poor Lucy detected it too. At any rate she was very silent and uncomfortable in her presence, and soon slipped away to her own chamber, where Marian found her crying alone an hour or two later.

At length came the day of the funeral, and the mourning was ready, with everything else in such proper order that Allan looked too thoroughly satisfied to be in very deep trouble.

Indeed, Marian saw with regret that her brother's passion for genteel and presentable appearances was being so fully gratified, that he could not look beyond the present moment to the hard and pinching necessities that must succeed such an outlay.

But Mrs. Barton from her mysterious store produced the means of paying for all, even to the mourning dresses of the family, and seemed to appease an uncomfortable twinge of conscience by doing so; for even amid her tears and moans, the night they returned to their empty-looking house, after leaving its deceased head slumbering with the dead in the cemetery, she said with something like satisfaction:

"All the money that I was able to—to—that is, all the little sum I saved, has gone to the last penny in paying respect to your dear lost father. I have not one single copper left, and no one can say that it was a bad or selfish use to make of it."

Marian remembered the gold she had seen her count from the canvas bag in the trunk, and she knew as well as her mother herself did, that she could not have saved one farthing of it out of the scanty housekeeping store, that never was quite sufficient for its purpose; but neither Lucy nor Allan seemed surprised at the unlooked-for treasure, neither of them had ever made themselves responsible for any of the family needs, and so they had been saved the habit of calculation that Marian from her very helpfulness was forced to learn.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MARIAN'S ADVENTURE WITH THE LOCKET.

The sisters presented themselves in Madam Tinzler's rooms betimes on the morning of their agreement, and seeing them in deep mourning, that busy lady received them good-humoredly, though she had been rather inclined to doubt Marian's story of her bereavement at first.

"You see I'm used to all sorts of girls," she remarked, as she gave them their places and set them at work. "Some of 'em are so cute that they can lie better than tell the truth, and there's no knowing what they won't say for the sake of getting a holiday, you know."

Marian did not reply, her heart was too full and ached too wearily to allow her to answer the coarse speech.

While her mother and sister had freely indulged their sorrow, hers had been stifled, and now that the quiet time had come, and with it the necessity of taking up that endless struggle for daily bread, her poor wounded spirit shrank pained and sore from the harsh contact of the unfeeling world.

Madame Tinzler saw the tears spring from beneath her work-woman's long, dark lashes, and drop heavily on her trembling hands.

"There, don't cry, girl; don't be foolish," was her consoling remark; and she added, sharply, "I can't give you this pink satin doublet to stitch, if you mean to go blubbering like that, and spotting the material."

Lucy flushed indignantly, but Marian instantly controlled herself.

"I'll be careful, ma'am," she said quietly; "please show me how it is to be done."

So she hid her emotion by a strong effort, showing only a cheerful exterior, and setting herself steadily to do her duty.

Lucy, on the contrary, seemed to have received a painful prejudice from the costumer's first words; she avoided speaking to her whenever it was not positively necessary, and worked with a fitful or listless impulse that soon became apparent to her sister, and to hide which the poor girl redoubled her own energy.

Poor Marian, she had looked forward to Lucy's rescue from the perilous circumstances into which her yet unexplained misfortunes had drifted her, as the one object for which all other aims and desires must be sacrificed.

Yet now that she had her with her once more safe at home, there was something so helpless and hopeless in Lucy's manner, such a listless look in her beautiful eyes, such a sad drooping of her once gay head, that poor, devoted Marian was forced to acknowledge that though her sister's body was there, her heart and thoughts were wandering far away.

"She is not contented," she thought to herself; "she feels some inexplicable difference between what she was and what she is, and shrinks even from mother and me, as I can see daily."

It was with fear and anxiety, then, as well as with love, that Marian strove to make her sister's path easy, assuming all its difficulties as her own part, and standing between her and every trouble she could ward off.

Her own heart was not without its unspoken pang. Eugene's absence and silence rankled there like a poisoned dart.

What though she was forced to renounce all hope or joy in his love, still her soul yearned toward him continually, and his image was ever present with her.

He had gone, no one knew why or where, and those who had proven to be his enemies strove to circulate evil reports about him.

Her own mother countenanced these wicked stories, and had even tried to repeat them to Lucy, when Marian indignantly interfered, and almost forgot her respect for her parent in her anger at the disgraceful calumny.

It was about a week after her father's funeral that the conversation concerning Eugene occurred, and Marian knew that Mrs. Blanchard had been at the house in their absence, because it always happened that Mrs. Barton was sure to speak slightingly of Eugene whenever his mother had been to visit her.

"It was while you were away, Lucy, that poor Mrs. Blanchard's son behaved so shamefully, I think," she began, when the family were seated at the sewing-table, and Marian was trimming a page's dress of blue velvet she had brought home to finish.

"What did he do?" Lucy asked, without looking up or showing any interest in the subject.

She was habitually preoccupied, and often answered at random when spoken to. Had she raised her eyes then, she would have seen her sister's cheeks growing scarlet, and her lips working nervously with excitement.

"He was always idle and vexatious," pursued Mrs. Barton, as if repeating a lesson lately learned; "indeed, his conduct might well lead to the belief that he was subject to fits of insanity, but his last act of violence in breaking into his mother's jewel case and robbing her of valuable gems—"

"Hush, mother, I entreat and implore you," cried Marian, trembling violently; "don't stain your lips with that false, trumped up story. Oh, how can you, how can any one be so cruel as to utter such calumnies against the absent!"

Mrs. Barton, in some perturbation, and speaking under much excitement, said she knew "that Mrs. Blanchard wouldn't say what was not true, and told her daughter that it was very wrong for her to try to take a son's part against his own mother," &c., &c.

"His mother!" interrupted Marian, scornfully—"his mother! Oh, what a vile desecration of a sacred name! Do mothers villify and persecute their children?—or is it not rather the work of an enemy, a bitter, ruthless enemy, who knows she has done a wrong, and so hates her injured victim?"

Marian got up and crossed the room as she spoke, her eyes flashing and her breast heaving.

Lucy, recalled to herself for once, looked startled and astonished, and her mother, evidently thinking she had gone too far, began to recede.

"I'm sure I did not mean to rouse you so, Marian," she said, meekly. "I only repeated—"

"Yes, I know," interrupted her daughter again, and this time her excitement died out, and a look of sorrow and regret took its place, "and I am sorry, very sorry that I spoke so hastily, but please don't listen to *that woman*, mother, she is not our true friend, and I wish she would not come here."

Saying this, she stood still an instant, as if trying to remember where she was and what she had been doing before her mother's unfortunate speech roused her, while Mrs. Barton, after an unfinished word or two, subsided into silence.

"I must get some blue silk," said Marian, recovering her calmness and coming back to her work in her usual manner. "I've promised to finish this suit to-night for the fancy ball to-morrow; there is only one place where I can get the right shade, and so I'll go for it myself."

"What a pity Allan is not in to go with you," her mother said; but Marian was already putting on her sacque and hat, and assuring her sister—who made a faint offer of going with her—that she was not in the least afraid, she started off at once.

The fact was she was glad to be out in the open air, to be alone and free to chide herself for her late absence of self-control.

"I must not let my poor bruised heart be seen too often," she thought. "I must hide my allegiance to my idol, since I cannot serve him by displaying it. Who knows but my poor deluded mother is not set as a spy upon me by that cruel, cunning woman!"

The thought gave her intense pain. She believed Mrs. Blanchard to be capable of any amount of duplicity and evil, and could not rely on her too docile parent in such unscrupulous hands.

"I would to Heaven that I could fly with Lucy and mother from the city where she lives, and so elude her subtile influence that seems bent on poisoning our hopes and affections," said the poor girl to herself; but she knew her brother Allan's plans would interfere with any change, and conscious of the difficulties that opposed any attempt at direct separation from her enemy—she called up her courage and self-command in forming a safeguard against her encroachments for the future.

"I must see and appeal to her," she thought; "if she looks at Lucy with that peculiarly contemptuous smile again, the poor girl will believe her secret is betrayed. She must and shall not torment my sister—the ruin of *my* hopes, the crushing of *my* poor heart must satisfy her malice."

As she hurried on, Marian thrust her nervously trembling hands into the pockets of her coat, and the right one encountered what she supposed to be a small, lady's watch.

Amazed at the circumstance, she drew it out, and having reached a street lamp, stopped to examine it by the light.

As she did so, she was not aware of the passing of another figure just behind her—that of a tall, dark man, gaudily dressed, and of a very flashy style in manner and appearance, who had been following her ever since she left her own door.

"Why this is Lucy's coat," she thought, examining its make and shape. "I mistook it for mine—but how came this watch into it—how did she get such a splendid thing?"

As she turned it over, holding it up to the light, she saw that she had mistaken its use.

"No, it is not a watch I see—it is a locket, and a very rich and beautiful one; I will put it back, because it worries me to see such a thing in Lucy's possession. Oh, how I wish that she would speak the truth, and lift this terrible burden of doubt and gloom off my poor heart!"

She replaced it where she had found it, and hurried on quickly.

The man in her rear, kept pace with her until she reached the poplar lot, then he disappeared into its shadows, and she passed on until she reached the shop, where she purchased her silk, and returned, still perplexed and disturbed on the subject of her late discovery.

"Shall I tell her I found it?" she asked herself; "shall I implore her to trust me with her unhappy story! Oh, no, it would only give her fresh pain; if she could tell me anything to relieve this dreadful doubt she would do it. And I must be patient and think of her sorrow, not of my own. Dear Lucy, she has suffered too much for me to inflict one other pang upon her. Oh, Heaven, teach me to be less selfish, and more thoughtful and pitiful for my poor, poor darling!"

She had reached the open space on her way back—and in the dim starlight the naked old poplars looked like giant skeletons, stretching toward the darkening sky. A chill feeling like a premonition of evil or danger stole over her—and for a single instant she paused before crossing from the lighted corner over toward that lonely spot that lay between her and home.

But she was naturally brave, and the tremor was gone before she had recognized its presence.

"I must make haste—there are four hours work on that page's dress yet," she thought, "and we have promised to be at the work-room early to-morrow, to help with the fairy dresses."

While the thought passed through her mind, she reached the darkest part of the lot, and a crouching figure stealing behind her, caught her round the waist with one strong arm that dragged her downward, whilst the other wrapped a cloak over her head so tightly that her very breath was stifled and her wild shriek of terror died away in its heavy folds.

(To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 8.)

CLAUDIA'S TRIUMPH.

BY CLEMENTINE MONTAGU,

"AUTHOR OF "THE COST OF CONQUEST," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

BURIED HOPES.

Her cheek is pale: what is the cause
That care should mantle o'er
The cheek so young and beautiful,
Cloudless and fair before?
It seemed as though an early blight
Had nipped that lovely flower;
Ere spring could all its charms unfold,
It drooped at winter's power.
—*Henry Gilpin.*

When the young sailor had returned to England after his weary months of travel and endurance, he had driven straight to a lodging he had used to have in town, in Russell square. The house was kept by an old lady who had once been a servant in his father's family, and whenever he wanted apartments for a few days he always went to her. Her joy at seeing him knew no bounds; but it changed into sorrow when she saw the effect of the news she had to communicate respecting Alma Bouverie, and she was not a little frightened when he rushed from the house, declaring that he would stop the marriage at all costs. He came back from the church calmer, but with a look of stony despair on his face, and made a hasty toilet, telling her he had business which would take him out again. She prepared some refreshment for him, but he would not take it, and left the house. She did not hear him come in the second time, but, going into his room for something, was horrified to find him stretched senseless on the floor.

When Frank Vavasour opened his eyes from the deathlike stupor which had come upon him, he saw a familiar face bending over him, and a voice he knew asked him how he felt.

Still, it was all like a confused dream. The voice and face seemed part and parcel of the old time at Westerpark.

"Why, don't you know me?" it said again. "Bertram—Austin Bertram, you know. We met at poor Bouverie's."

Frank recollected now, and he raised himself to look about.

"You here?" he said.

"Here! I should think so. I live with Mrs. Oakes whenever I am in town. I'm glad I happened to be here now. I shall be able to cheer you up a little. It's lonely work being ill in London lodgings, and I see that you are far from strong."

"No. I have gone through a great deal since I saw you," was all that Frank could find to say.

He felt a strange repugnance to this man, but he was too feeble to show it, and Austin Bertram established himself by his bedside. Very kind and gentle he proved, and when, after a few days, Frank was able to creep down-stairs, and the doctor insisted upon complete change of scene, the proposal that they should take a journey together, though somewhat distasteful to the young man, was not refused.

Whatever motives Mr. Bertram had for seeking this companionship he managed to conceal, and Frank accompanied him to Brighton, innocent of all thought of meeting his former love, or entering into any of the dissipations to which his companion led him. Bertram pressed him to drink and drown care, to gamble, that he might forget in the excitement of the game the torturing remembrance of what he had lost; he threw him into the society of the fascinating actress, till her presence began, not to make him forget, but to turn his over-excited brain dizzy; and all the while Austin Bertram stood and looked on, waiting with secret satisfaction for the *denouement* of the plot which he was hatching.

And this was how it came to pass that Frank Vavasour was thrown into the companionship of a man for whom he felt—he could hardly tell why—an instinctive repugnance. But Austin Bertram would not be shaken off; he was deaf to all hints, blind to the thousand-and-one signs that daily showed the feelings with which his companion regarded him, and Frank had perforce to submit to the companionship there was no tangible reason for avoiding.

On the night of the *rencontre* at the theatre, Austin Bertram's carefully-uttered words had made two people very unhappy.

Frank returned to the hotel with him, feeling sick at heart, and as though it mattered little what became of him, since Alma, his Alma, was heartless and cold. It was terrible to him to think that, after all their mutual vows, she had quite forgotten their love and sorrow.

And Alma! As for her, when her husband and Mr. Bertram returned to the box, a perfect volcano of bitter passion was burning in her usually calm breast.

"Ah!" she moaned, as she sat back in her luxurious chair—the envy of the pittites and denizens of the upper boxes, who thought how happy it must be to loll in easy chairs in private boxes, oblivious of the well-worn fact that an aching heart may beat beneath a velvet dress, and amidst the costliest surroundings. "Ah! can it be that he has so soon forgotten? Is he really in love with this woman? An actress! Oh! Frank, Frank! my own lost love."

"What is this La Claudia?" she murmured. "Is she so beautiful that all the world must fall at her feet? My husband, too, who a few short weeks ago vowed to love and cherish me, must leave me here alone while he goes to worship at the shrine of this painted puppet with the throng of butterfly admirers who swarm around her."

But, alas! it was Frank Vavasour's defection which she mourned for most, and poor Claudia was very hardly judged by her for her involuntary attraction. Lady Nortonshall fiercely resented her husband's proposal to introduce her to the actress.

"You must be out of your senses to propose such a thing to me," she said to him, when they were once more alone. "A woman who allows every man she meets to dangle after her with fulsome compliments and false flattery, a creature of tinsel and gaslight, she is surely no companion for your wife."

"Nay, Alma, you wrong her, and are angry with me for some reason which I cannot fathom," he replied. "You will think differently of this."

"Never—never!" she said, passionately. "I never could endure the sight of her. If only—"

"Only what?"

"That she has drawn him into her toils."

"Him! Who?"

"Frank. They say he loves her too."

"Bertram's shot took effect then," muttered Lord Nortonshall to himself. "That's the sting, after all."

He turned to his wife with a dark frown upon his face, which she did not care to meet. She had spoken in excitement, and the words had escaped her lips before she was aware. She would have given anything to recall them now when she saw the look upon her husband's face, but it was too late.

"And pray, Lady Nortonshall," he said, and his tone was chilling and icy in the extreme. "Nay, turn to me, if you please—I have something to say to you. May I ask you, without offending your very great delicacy, what it can signify to you, my wife, if any other man loves a woman who loves him in return? Your last reason for disliking this poor girl was a strange one, to say the least of it, to give your husband—namely, that another gentleman loves her. Had I been the lover, your objection would have been easier to understand."

"Oh!" she answered, with quivering lips, "you are hard and cruel, my lord. Knowing what you do know, for I have made no secret of it to you, you might have some little mercy on me. The words escaped me accidentally."

"Very probably, madam; but the thought would have been the same whether spoken or not. You say, 'knowing what I know, I should have mercy!' Do you intend to say that I am to put up with all sorts of romantic folly from you and that snivelling boy? That I am to stand quietly by and endure my wife's fainting and hysterics every time that she hears his name mentioned, and be told by every good-natured friend of his wild ravings after his lost love in every place where I set my foot?"

"Oh! for mercy's sake!"

But Lord Nortonshall had worked himself up to a pitch of savage fury now, and he would not be stopped.

"I've had enough of this maudlin foolery, my lady, and, by Heaven, I'll have no more! You should be thankful that yonder lad is enamored of some one else, and in a fair way of forgetting you. It might lead to my shooting him if he was not."

He spoke the words savagely, and Alma shuddered at his tone.

"As for yourself," he continued. "Nay, hear me out—I haven't much more to say. If you have no more spirit than to go on moping after a fellow who is forgetting your very name in love for another, you deserve all the misery you will bring upon yourself, that's all."

And flinging out of the room, he slammed the door behind him, leaving Alma terrified and oppressed by his vehemence. She made all sorts of excuses for him in her own mind, for he had been very kind to her hitherto, and she resolved, with many tears, that she would try and be all he wished her.

"Have I no spirit," she asked herself, as she dried the tears which had fallen on her cheeks, "that I allow all the world to see and comment on my sorrow for one who never can be mine? I will cast it off."

Lord Nortonshall remained out till very late that night, and when he returned Alma was asleep, with the traces of tears upon her eyes, which were red and swollen.

"She's a lovely creature," he murmured, bending down and kissing her lightly; "but an arrant little fool for all that. I wish that fellow had been blown to the moon before he had come back to make such a confounded muddle of matters."

There was peace between them when they met the following morning at the

breakfast table, outwardly, at least. No reference was made to the scene of the night before, and the meal over, his lordship went out, leaving Alma alone.

She was sitting at the window, sadly thinking as she gazed out over the parade on to the green waters dotted with little pleasure boats, though her dreamy eyes scarce took in the lovely scene which lay stretched before her, when suddenly she was roused from her revery by the opening of the door, and looking up, she saw the form of the man she dreaded so—Austin Bertram.

"I said 'Not at home!'" she said to the servant, in confusion, for she was conscious that her face told tales.

"I hope I am not intruding," said her visitor; "but I met Nortonshall on the pier, and he assured me that the interdiction would not extend to myself. May I trust that you will endorse his assurance?"

"I made no exceptions, sir. My husband doubtless had his reasons for sending you up. Will you be seated?"

"I fear I am *de trop*," he said, hesitatingly.

"By no means. I am doing nothing, as you see."

"Nothing with your hands—I do see that—but your mind is busy. My dear Lady Nortonshall," he continued, with an affectation of frankness, "do not look angrily at me if I use the privilege of an old friend and speak to you."

"Did my—I mean, did Lord Nortonshall—send you to me?"

"No; why should he? I wanted to see you on my own account. When I spoke last night to you about—"

He hesitated, and appeared embarrassed.

"Oh, don't scruple to mention his name," said Alma. "You mean about Mr. Vavasour—say Frank Vavasour."

"Yes, it was about him. I saw that it annoyed you, and I was grieved it should; but it was true, believe me."

"If your object in seeking me this morning was simply to malign an old friend, we may as well drop the conversation at once, sir. There needs nothing further to be said upon the subject."

"Pardon me, I do not wish to malign him, but to justify myself for speaking what you thought to be a cruel slander. Nortonshall said I might, if you would listen to me."

"So you have made it a matter of discussion between you, have you? But no matter—go on, sir."

"I have very little to say, madam, since you take it in that light. I thought you would be better and happier if I could disenchant you concerning this young man."

"Better!" she repeated, with kindling scorn. "Better for believing that the man I once loved above all earth is a mean, false, fickle creature, attracted like a silly moth by the glitter of every flame that flickers across his path. Such knowledge does not bring happiness, Mr. Bertram."

"Not attracted by every light, madam; only one—Claudia."

"An actress!"

"Even so. Believing what he did it was only natural that he should turn to some one for consolation. He was thrown into her society by accident, and now he seeks it of his own accord. To see them together you would think that life for him 'was but the shadow of her haunting eyes,' as Claude Melnotte says. He seems to live and breathe only in her presence."

"I'll not believe it."

"I wish I could convince you; you would be calmer in the knowledge that he was consoled. Dear Lady Nortonshall, things have turned out most unfortunately; will you not allow me to stay and smooth them for you? For the sake of the old time let me do what I can to serve you?"

"There never was any 'old time' between us two to justify your interference in anything that concerns me," answered Alma, haughtily. "I will not believe your calumnies against Mr. Vavasour, nor will I listen to you any longer."

Her hand was upon the bell, when he stopped her.

"One moment," he said. "I see something which you may believe in preference to my words."

"Ah! what is it?"

"Do you see that carriage with the pair of grays?"

"Yes. What of it?"

"Frank Vavasour hired it this morning for a *tete a tete* drive with Claudia."

Alma made no comment, but she strained her eyes in the direction of the advancing carriage.

It came rapidly on; two persons seated in it in close conversation. They were the actress and Frank Vavasour. He looked pale and worn, but was listening with marked attention to the lovely creature by his side, who was talking earnestly to him, as though she was impressing some fact upon his memory.

"Are you satisfied now?" asked Austin Bertram, as the vehicle stopped almost under the window, and Frank got out to execute a commission for his companion, who remained seated.

Lady Nortonshall made no reply. She was availing herself of the opportunity to examine well this, her rival, who had ousted her image from Frank's heart; and burning as she was with rage and regret, she could discern nothing that even her jealous eyes could find fault with.

From the little white bonnet, which contrasted so well with the dark hair and clear brunette complexion, down to the tip of the tiny boot which peeped from beneath the skirt of her dress, the attire of the actress was faultless.

Faultless! Yes, Lady Nortonshall was forced to confess to herself that she was a fascinating creature. All her attire was neat and lady-like, though costly and rich; nor was there aught in the sweet, sad face, which looked with such loving eyes after the young man's retreating figure, to provoke criticism.

Alma watched her till Frank returned to the carriage, and saw the sweet smile she bestowed upon him as he leaned over her and arranged a cushion.

The carriage drove away, and Alma bowed her head upon her hands, forgetful of everything save the time when she might have looked into Frank Vavasour's eyes with the same bright smile and without blame.

Austin Bertram looked at her with a scornful smile.

"Cured!" he said to himself; "nerved into a worldly, heartless woman from this hour, or I'm no reader of human nature. I said I'd have my revenge, Alma Bonverie, when you flung back my proffered love with scorn. I'm beginning to taste it now, and it's sweet—very sweet."

"How I humiliated myself," she said, bitterly; "and before him! What a poor, weak creature he must think me! From this hour, though my heart is breaking, they shall see me gay. If he can forget, so can I. Doubtless that man has gone to my husband to report all that has passed between us. Let him—my lady will be herself again before he returns."

She went to her room, and bathed her eyes, and when Lord Nortonshall returned he found her calm and quiet, ready to drive, or ride, or go anywhere he wished.

Not a word passed between them relative to the past night, or Mr. Bertram's visit of the morning, and though Alma was conscious that she was watched, and every action and word commented upon, none could have told that she knew it.

Lady Nortonshall went her way gracefully and with perfect self-possession, but utterly different from the girlish, confiding bride of so short a time before.

CHAPTER XIV.

A COWARD BLOW.

Kill men in the dark! Where be these bloody thieves?
* * * Ho! Murder! murder!
—*Shakspeare.*

An old saw, and a wise one, tells us that "appearances are deceitful," and, despite Austin Bertram's insinuations and the apparent evidence of her own eyes, Lady Nortonshall was wrong in the conclusions she had drawn.

Frank Vavasour did not love Claudia; he merely sought in her society a relief from the one wretched thought which haunted him day and night, the remembrance that Alma never could be his, and the still more maddening idea that she no longer cared even to remember him.

In spite of reason and good sense, regardless of the fact that she could only continue her love toward him at the expense of truth and honesty toward the man who called her wife—this last was the bitterest thought of all to him—the idea that she was faithless to the memory of their former love, and turned with regard and affection to the husband she had chosen, tortured him.

Men do not stop to reflect when they are maddened by jealousy, and he would rather have believed that the woman he loved so madly was wearily fretting against the chains that bound her, and pining in secret for him, than have seen her happy and contented, as he supposed she was.

Austin Bertram watched the conflict in his mind with inward satisfaction. He had his own reasons for acting as he did toward him, though he kept them to himself.

"If I can only make him throw himself away," he would say to himself, "make of him a drunkard, a *roué*, a gambler—but I need not fear him—the worthy young man will kill him himself all in good time, if I only have patience. And yet! pshaw! What have I to fear? Everything belonging to him is at the bottom of the sea, and that trifle along with the rest of his valuables. It can never turn up from there; and if it does—well, what then? It never belonged to Austin Bertram, let him prove it if he can."

And so six months passed away, and Mr. Betram was still the self-constituted Mentor of Frank Vavasour, and by way of rousing him from the state of melancholy into which he had fallen, strove to introduce him into all the most dissipated society in London, and to make of him what he had said—gambler, drunkard, *roué*. He was not so successful as he could have wished, however. Frank Vavasour had a talisman which seemed to preserve him from all evil, and helped to carry him unscathed through all the scenes of vice and debauchery to which his treacherous friend introduced him.

His safeguard was the pure and honest love of a good woman. A love which watched over him wherever he went, and preserved him from falling into the snares by which he was beset.

Yes; Claudia loved the handsome youth, though her love was not returned. Their intercourse had shown her so much that was good in him, that she at first respected and pitied him for the great sorrow, which, with a woman's unerring eye, she had discovered in him; then by degrees the actress had stepped over the slight barrier which separates pity from love, and given him her whole heart.

Claudia knew something of the story of his grief, knew also that it was Lord Nortonshall's wife whom he had loved, but she did not know who that wife was. His lordship had once or twice spoken to her of his lady, and, as she fancied, contemptuously, as she should not like a husband to speak of her, but they had never met.

Lady Nortonshall was in Paris now, and already the world had begun to speak of her as a neglected wife, and to call to mind all the prophecies that it did not make.

"Ah, my dear! reformed men do not always make the best husbands."

So spoke the Lady Alicia Tremylton, Lord Nortonshall's first cousin, in one of her confidential chats over a cup of tea with an old schoolfellow, who would sometimes drop into her ladyship's cosey little house in Mayfair for a quiet bit of scandal.

"No, indeed, Lady Alicia," was the reply. "And to tell the truth, I always thought that Nortonshall was a great deal too gay ever to make a good husband. Why, I have heard—but there, it is ill speaking of a man to his own relations, though, to be sure, it's better they should be told than strangers."

"Goodness gracious, my dear Miss Malladine!" exclaimed the old lady, for Alicia Tremylton had long passed her grand climacteric; "what on earth do you mean? If you have heard anything about Graham Nortonshall you need have no fear of telling me—there's nothing too bad for me to believe of him."

And she shook the corkscrew ringlets which bedizened her ancient forehead, compressing her lips with a stern air of wonderment at the depravity of this mundane sphere in general, and the gentleman under discussion more particularly.

Miss Malladine was only too glad to recount what she had heard.

"Well, they do say," she went on, "that your cousin has left his wife in Paris, while he is running after a woman—an actress, my dear—here in London; and the presents he makes to the creature are enough to make a hole in a larger fortune than his, even with Lady Nortonshall's money to back it."

"Ah!" groaned the Lady Alicia, and they forthwith proceeded to discuss the news with all the gusto which worldly-minded ladies of a certain age invariably feel at some highly-spiced piece of scandal.

And was it so? Yes; Lady Nortonshall's health required change, his lordship said, as an excuse for whirling her off from England in the hasty fashion which he did; but, with all his solicitude, he did not trouble to attend to her himself.

Leaving Alma abroad with her aunt, whom he had prevailed upon to accompany them, he returned to London, and might be found night after night at any of his old haunts, mixing with his bachelor friends as before his marriage. They wondered, but said nothing, only Lord Wedderburn venturing a remark upon the subject.

They were at rather an uproarious supper-party, at which several very pretty *coryphées* from the Elysium Theatre assisted, to their extreme satisfaction. Invitations without end had been sent to Claudia, but she steadily refused any such gayeties, and she went home every night after the performance, attended by no one save the faithful Dorothy, who watched over her young mistress with the fidelity and courage of a mastiff.

"It's deuced strange that girl won't come out," said Lord Nortonshall, during a lull in the conversation.

"Who are you speaking of?" chorussed half a dozen merry voices.

"La Claudia, of course," returned his lordship. "She's the spiciest and best bred of the sort that's been seen for a long time."

"Oh, my lord, present company!" said a lovely girl who sat near him, with a playful shake of her golden curls, and a flush on her cheeks which told that the champagne was doing its work.

"Always excepted, of course, my dear," replied the peer, already half-intoxicated. "When I spoke I was thinking of Claudia's glorious dark eyes and hair. Other fellows may prefer your tint; I should if I had not too much of it at home."

"Nortonshall, do you know what you are saying?" said Lord Wedderburn, in a low tone. "Don't speak of your wife, here, man."

"Has Lady Nortonshall fair hair like mine?" asked the girl who had before spoken.

"Not half so lovely, my dear. Lady Nortonshall can boast of no beauty in particular, nor any virtues that I know of, except one."

"Ah! what is that?"

"The faculty of grumbling, and that she has in perfection."

Lord Wedderburn was disgusted at hearing this before so many curious listeners. He knew that his friend was partly intoxicated, or he would not have spoken so.

"Hush, Nortonshall!" he said; "you are not yourself. Miss Broughton, since you are curious concerning Lady Nortonshall, let me inform you that she is goodness and beauty itself. Her hair may not have your brilliant gleam, nor her eyes your sparkle, but then she does not indulge in champagne suppers. She is a true lady and a virtuous wife; let her name be respected here, and not mentioned again among us."

"Hear, hear, Wedderburn," said some of the gentlemen, one or two of whom had wives at home, who knew nothing of these orgies, and who consequently felt rather uncomfortable; "you're quite right. Let us drop all mention of our wives if we respect them; if we don't, they're hardly worth mentioning at all."

Lord Nortonshall sat silent and rebuked, and pretty Flora Broughton tossed her head in an aggrieved manner.

"Well, I'm sure," she muttered, but did not venture to return to the subject.

Shortly after this the party broke up, and the gentlemen went their way.

Lord Wedderburn was going down stairs when he felt a slight touch upon his shoulder, and, turning hastily round, he saw a gentleman whose face was familiar to him, but whom he could not for the moment recollect.

"Let me speak to you for a moment," he said, hurriedly. "Let me thank you for what you said just now."

"For what I said?"

"Yes—about her."

"Who?"

"Lady Nortonshall. Never mind who I am—it does not matter; but let me thank you for your courage in trying to shield a defenceless woman's name from being bandied about by such lips and tongues as those. Heaven bless you for it!"

He was gone in a moment, before Lord Wedderburn had recovered from his astonishment, and he turned to those who were descending the stairs behind him for an explanation.

"Hallo, Nortonshall!" he said, "who is my lady's champion?"

"How should I know?" retorted the peer, with an oath. "Some fool who has been listening, I suppose."

"I know, my lord," said Bertram, who had been one of the party.

"Indeed!"

Austin Bertram drew the young man aside, and spoke in a low tone.

"Yes," he said, "and Nortonshall knows him too. It was his wife's old lover, Francis Vavasour. He was supping in No. 16, next to us."

"Ah! do you think that Nortonshall recognized him?"

"I dare say not. He has been pitching into the champagne pretty freely. I must give young Vavasour a hint to keep quiet, or he'll be getting shot if he doesn't mind."

"Why? Does he still admire his old sweetheart?"

"Admire! that's a cool word. He loves her madly. He's gone to the bad altogether, since her marriage."

"Poor wretch!" and with this consoling remark, Lord Wedderburn went his way, and left Mr. Bertram to go his.

Which he did; and arriving at home found Frank—for they still occupied the same house—busy with letters and papers.

He said nothing of what had passed, but talked upon unimportant subjects. Presently Frank remarked—

"Poor old Sloan is dead."

"Indeed—and who may he be?"

"My lawyer, and more than that—my friend and adviser too. They have written to me to take away some property I left with him before I went out in the Arethusa."

"What for?"

"'And another king arose who knew not Joseph,'" said the young man, with a smile. "In other words, his successor will only have to do with my affairs as far as money-matters are concerned. There was something besides money in my old friend's hands, which I will take into my own keeping now."

"Why, what an incomprehensible being you are, Vavasour. I have heard you say twenty times, I am sure, that everything you had in movables went to the bottom of the sea when the timbers of the Arethusa parted company, and yet—"

"I did say so, and repeat it. Everything that would have fetched me a pennypiece, had I wanted one, lies buried in the Atlantic; but for all that, there is something yonder that is of more value than anything I have lost."

"A paradox."

"Perhaps. Shall I tell you what he held in his keeping, that old lawyer? He had a parcel of old letters, not of much value now, and with them certain mementoes of the night of Mr. Bouverie's murder."

"Ah!"

"Yes, a carefully-written detail of the events as they occurred—and the glove which the old gamekeeper thought was mine."

"And do you fancy you will ever ferret that matter out?"

"I do."

"But that glove tells nothing."

"It is one link of a chain—and I mean to find the remainder some day."

"Ah! an enterprise I should hardly care to take upon myself. *Au revoir.*"

"Good-night."

The door closed behind Bertram, and Frank retired to rest. In the morning he went to the lawyers's office and received his precious parcel. He did not open it till evening, for Bertram contrived to keep him employed all day—but at night, he said—

"I'll leave you in peace now, Vavasour. I see you are dying to get at that legal-looking packet of yours. Good-night. I shan't be home till the small hours—perhaps not at all to-night."

And so saying, he went away. Late on in the night did Frank Vavasour sit musing over the faded papers which formed the packet, tearing some, laying aside others, and thinking sadly on them all. On the top lay the glove, which was such a terrible mute witness of a past catastrophe, and he examined it as if in the hope that he could make the senseless leather reveal what was mysterious in that dark drama.

Suddenly he heard a slight rustling behind him, and turned hastily round.

What caused it he never knew. He was conscious of an uplifted arm, the gleam of descending steel, a sharp pang, and then falling heavily to the floor. All else was darkness and blank insensibility.

CHAPTER X.

THE "EVENING STAR."

There are some shrewed contents in yonder paper
Which steal the color from Bassanio's cheek.
—*Shakespeare.*

In a private box of the Royal Elysium Theatre Lord Nortonshall and his friend Lord Wedderburn, were discussing the events narrated in the preceding chapter. It was the following evening, and the story of the murderous attempt upon Frank Vavasour's life filled all the newspapers, and—with many variations of circumstances in the telling—was the subject of conversation all over town.

"It's a very strange tale," said Lord Nortonshall, who had been listening to his companion's account of the affair with evident interest.

"Very. Nobody seems to be able to offer the slightest explanation of the attack."

"I wonder whether murder, or robbery only was meant. Did you hear?"

"No. I got the whole of my information from Bertram. He seemed to be quite out up about it; he's living in the same house with young Vavasour, you know—in fact, they're chumming together—but he was out very nearly all night."

"H'm! Then it couldn't have been he."

"Who? Bertram? What an idea!"

And Lord Wedderburn laughed.

"I don't know," continued Nortonshall; "I always suspect the most improbable person in cases of that sort."

"But what possible motive could he have?"

"Can't say. If you come to motives, you might be suspecting me, you know. Fortunately, I could prove a very satisfactory *alibi*."

"Pshaw! Don't talk nonsense, Nortonshall!"

"I like to suit my conversation to my hearers," retorted his lordship. "But is that all the news you could glean of the matter?"

"About all. The landlady is completely bewildered, and can give no information. All she seems to know is, that she found young Vavasour stretched insensible upon the floor this morning, with his head frightfully cut. There was no trace of any one having gone either in or out, and nothing missing, as far as she could see."

"It's a very queer affair," reiterated Nortonshall.

"It is a mystery altogether."

"And he's not dead?"

"No; but there seems to be only a very slight chance for his life. But where were you, Nortonshall, that you did not hear of it till now?"

"I have been down to Eton to see Dalrymple's boy. I promised to look up the little beggar sometimes. From there I went to Windsor, and met some fellows, and slept at the hotel. Does Claudia know of the affair?"

"I haven't had the chance of speaking to her to-night, so can't say; but I should imagine not by the way she's acting. Look at her—she's glorious!"

She was, indeed, almost surpassing herself. Their box was very close to the stage, and the two gentlemen could see every movement of her expressive features.

The piece was "Too Strong a Chain"—the same in which she had made her first appearance in England—and her greater experience, coupled with the somewhat matured style of her beauty, made the part of the wife seem more fitted to her than when she had first essayed it.

Breathlessly the audience hung upon her words and actions, and showed by ready tears their sympathy with her fictitious woes. She was at her best upon this evening. Frank Vavasour's manner toward her had been more than usually affectionate and lover-like for the last day or two, and she was beginning to dream of a peaceful home, far away from the whirl and glamour of her stage life, with him she loved—the man whom she was idealizing into a hero such as was never written of in story.

Her part was one she liked, her new dresses fitted to a miracle, and were becoming to her beyond her hopes, so that, altogether, Claudia was very peaceful and happy that evening.

There was one scene in the piece which she had hitherto always made especially thrilling—one when, in the midst of a gay throng of admirers, the *feted cantatrice* reads in a newspaper which is put into her hands by chance, a paragraph recounting her husband's misery and destitution.

Though not intended by the author for a very great point in the piece, Claudia had succeeded in making it so, and the scene had come to be anxiously looked for by her admirers whenever the piece was performed. The act was about to commence this evening, the stage was set, and the actors and actresses engaged in it in their places for the rising of the curtain, when some one suddenly exclaimed—

"The paper!"

By some chance or other, the newspaper so necessary to the scene had been forgotten, and the property-man rushed in search of it, snatching one from the hands of a mild, inoffensive-looking young man in spectacles whom he met, with a hasty "By your leave, sir," and flung it upon the table of the stage just as the bottom of the curtain left the floor, and revealed the scene to the eyes of those in front.

The young gentleman so curiously robbed of his evening news was a relation of Mr. Golightly's, and had been admitted behind the scenes as a great favor to see the minor mechanism of that mimic life. He was so astonished at the new world to which he had been so suddenly introduced that he could do nothing but wander about in speechless amazement, peering through his spectacles into every corner, like a second Mr. Ledbury, and smiling urbanely on all he met.

If he fancied that the regions which lay beyond the curtain of a theatre were those of enchantment, peopled with radiant beings who walked about in glistening attire, and would now and then condescend to speak to beings from the outer world, he was grievously mistaken. The divinities of the stage turned into very commonplace creatures, and became of the earth earthy as soon as they were out of sight of the footlights.

Lovely young ladies wrapped themselves in unbecoming shawls and cloaks, and fled away to distant regions, where profane foot might never hope to enter.

The lovely Claudia herself disappeared between the acts. She rarely spoke to anybody before the piece she played in was over, and the stage became a chaos of furniture and bewildering scenery, and was given over to men in linen blouses and paper caps, who hustled and trod on the toes of all who came in their way without mercy.

The manager's relative wished that Mr. Golightly would come back and pilot him safely out of the scene of confusion in which he found himself truly a stranger in a strange land. All the confusing talk which reached his ears was so much Greek to him, and he had just begun to solace himself with a newspaper, when it was rudely snatched from his hands by a dirty-faced bearded man, and borne on to the stage.

Presently the man returned.

"I beg your pardon most humbly, sir," he said; "but the curtain was just a-going up, and a newspaper is a most important property in this scene. If you will tell me what it was—for I never noticed—I will send for another."

"Oh, dear, no—it's of no consequence," replied the young gentleman, courteously, and inwardly wondering as to the meaning of the phrase the man had used. "It's of no consequence whatever. It was only this evening's *Star*. What is it wanted for upon the stage?"

"Why, you see, sir, Mademoiselle Claudia has to read something out of a newspaper—it's the business of the scene, you know—and then she faints away. It's as fine a bit of acting, the way she does it—as you ever saw, and— Coming—I'm coming!" and the property-man hurried away to his duties.

The young gentleman stood at the wing, and watched the scene throughout, thinking he had never seen anything in his life so real as the actress's falling senseless to the ground with the crushed newspaper in her hand.

Lord Nortonshall and his friend also watched the scene intently. The light *badinage* between the singer and her guests, the beaming face and merry, ringing laugh, seemed to them never to have been so effective, and when, toward the end of the scene, a newspaper was brought into play, and a lively wager laid that it could not be turned over without finding some adulation of her triumphs, they declared they had never seen her look so sparkling.

Then came the reading of the paragraph which was to turn her mirth into sadness, and it was here that the powers of the actress came into full play.

Her look of blank horror, the set, stony manner in which she took the paper from the hands of its holder, and said, "Let me read of my triumphs myself," were so true in their despairing pathos that the whole house burst into vociferous applause.

Claudia usually, after glancing at the fatal paragraph, crumpled the paper, as though unconsciously, and, with a low, gasping sigh, sank to the ground; but this evening was more than usually terribly real and pathetic. Her eyes distended, and the color fled from her lips and cheek till the rouge stood out in red patches with marked distinctness, and instead of the sigh there came a wail of intense anguish, as she sank to the ground.

"Gloriously done!" exclaimed Lord Nortonshall, as the curtain descended amid tumultuous applause. "It's almost too real."

"I'm half inclined to believe that it is real," his companion replied. "I never saw a face change so by any artificial means. How they are clamoring for her! Why don't she come?"

The applause and calls for the actress grew louder and louder, but no Claudia appeared, and presently, when the noise grew too loud to be passed by unnoticed, Mr. Golightly appeared, and, with many a smirk and bow, begged their forbearance for Mademoiselle Claudia, who had been taken suddenly ill.

"Nothing serious," he assured them. "She was even then recovering from the attack which had alarmed them, and would have the honor of appearing to finish the piece in a very few minutes, if they would kindly excuse her now," &c., &c.

"Then there was something the matter," Lord Wedderburn said. "Let us go round, Nortonshall."

They made their way to the stage, and met the actress at the wings. She was very pale, but perfectly calm and self-possessed, and returned their greetings with composure.

Lord Nortonshall inquired most earnestly respecting her attack. He was beginning to fancy himself very much in love with her, and was piqued at her coldness.

She turned away, assuring him that she was well again.

"It was nothing—really nothing," she said. "I suppose I was only over-exerted, or tired, or something. I am ready to go on now."

"The scene is hardly ready, mademoiselle," Mr. Golightly said. "Your illness alarmed us so much that we were afraid you would not be able to go on with the piece."

"Of course I can," she replied, somewhat sharply; and then, seeing Lord Nortonshall's attention fixed otherwise, she laid her hand on the other gentleman's arm, and said, in a low whisper, "Before I go on, tell me—is he dead?"

"No."

"Thank Heaven for that!"

"How did you hear it?" Lord Wedderburn asked.

"That paper—they gave it to me on the stage. They will let me see him, will they not? Dorothy will go with me, you know."

"I will make inquiries for you to-morrow," he replied. "Don't look so terribly excited. If it will give you any comfort, I will go to his lodgings now, and see how things are going. I can be back before you have finished here."

"Will you? You are a true friend."

She bent her pretty lips to his hand as she spoke, and went to her business. He turned away, leaving Lord Nortonshall standing watching her. As he went he trod upon the newspaper, which had been thrown off in the confusion, and picked it up; he saw therein a penny-a-liner's story of the catastrophe, making it ten times more hideous than it really was, and leaving no hope whatever of the recovery of the unfortunate victim.

On reaching Frank's lodgings, his lordship saw Austin Bertram, who was in close attendance upon his friend. From him he learned all that was known of the mystery till the wounded man should be able to speak. There was great hope that such would be the case yet, but at the same time there was great danger.

"Let the lady come, by all means," was Mr. Bertram's answer to the actress's request. "I doubt that it will only be for a short time—whoever did it, did his work well."

It was poor comfort to carry back to the loving heart in the green-room of the Elysium—but it was so much better than the wretched story she had read in the paper, that Claudia felt better for hearing it. She and Dorothy went to see the sick man in the morning, and so it came about that the first time Frank Vavasour opened his eyes in consciousness they rested on the loving, tearful face of Claudia Wynne.

(*To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 9.*)

RED KELLY;

OR,

The Free Riders of the Plains.

BY CAPTAIN CARNES,

AUTHOR OF "WEETZAL, THE SCOUT," ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"It is strange—very strange—unaccountably so."

"You say that Flamm called to see her on business matters."

"So Martha affirms," returned the colonel, his fine face wearing a troubled expression. "I was absent myself or I should have objected to her going out alone in the evening, so full as the city is of roughs at this time."

"And she has sent no word?"

"No; and her last quarter's pay was due."

"It is singular, one would have thought where she had been a member of your family so long."

"Stay," said Dewey, "there were two or three hastily written lines in note-form left in her room."

Griff did not like to inquire their import; if the colonel chose he would tell him.

"Nothing at all satisfying. 'I depart in in haste,' it ran, 'and have not time to say good-bye.'"

"Her clothing?"

"Is here still."

"And this was when?"

"Three weeks ago."

Griff pondered a few moments. Then his face changed expression.

"Colonel," he said, "are you willing that I should see—or rather, have you that note of hers?"

"Yes, in my pocket-book, somewhere."

The impressible old fellow was a trifle embarrassed to acknowledge that he had treasured the scrap of paper.

Griff did not notice his confusion, however, as he was busily engaged scanning the scrawl. Finally, he looked up, and met the colonel's questioning eyes. Again Hume ran his glance over the handwriting.

"Colonel Dewey," said he, impressively, "this is *not* Isabel Poinson's handwriting."

The brave old soldier did not comprehend.

"Certainly—yes, that's the note, isn't it?"

"It is the note; but it is not in Isabel Poinson's handwriting."

The colonel stared in blank and speechless astonishment at his companion.

"I do not understand it at all."

"There has been foul play."

"What?"

"Another than she wrote and left this missive to mislead you."

The gallant officer trembled to that extent as to be obliged to sit down.

"Make it plain, for God's sake, make it plain to me!"

Griff began—

"She, I am conscious, knew more of De Lancy's death than she ever told any one. We confided the secret of his untimely end to you. I, at first, believed that no person save Keith, myself and the murderer knew of the crime. Subsequent inquiries proved beyond doubt, that Miss Poinson was aware that it was not a suicide."

"Astounding!"

"Evidently the murderer had suspicions, or proof of the same, and—as regarded her knowledge—"

"Stop, Griff, I dare not have you finish," exclaimed his hearer intensely agitated.

"It is better, sir, to come directly to the point, as it may not yet be too late to afford help to her."

"Ah, yes, yes. I catch your meaning; but is there no room for doubt in regard to the note?"

"Look here one moment. The person who wrote this is evidently familiar with the lady's handwriting; but the forgery is apparent. There is less flourish in her make of capital letters than in this. Her up-strokes are more delicate, her down strokes lighter. You perceive"—Griff was holding the brief note which *he* had received from Miss Poinson before the officer, together with the few lines so treasured by the colonel—"her i's are dotted, these are not; her t's are finished with a loop, these are crossed."

"I see, good God! I see;" his agitation was painful to behold. "I have been treasuring this memento of her," said he, ready to rend the bit of paper in fragments, "while she perhaps has lain murdered for weeks. What are we to do? Direct our course, for my heart is ready to burst."

His companion felt to repeat almost in the language of old, "Behold how he loved her."

And yet, in actions, he had been tender and true to his invalid wife till the last. If his *thoughts* were disobedient, who shall hurl a stone at him?

After consulting a while longer with Dewey, Griff sought the now celebrated Chief of Police, Ambrose Keith.

"Don't you waste an ounce of sympathy;" was the latter's uncompromising commentary. "This proves, in my mind, what I have always affirmed, that she was connected with the murder. She has now joined her 'hail fellow,' and retires from the stage."

Griff strongly dissented.

"You are jaundiced with prejudice. This and that and the other put together proves that your suppositions cannot be true."

Keith slipped his eyebrows up as far as the hair would let them slide, being a more sarcastic argument than an hour's eloquence could convey.

"What about the note, Mr. Chief of Police?"

"A decoy to throw such credulous fellows as yourself off the scent."

"And the stolen money and the underground canal?"

"The horribly tangled mess must be ravelled out together. And this that Champ tells about the mark that Red Kelly might and could make with his bloody hand—why, it's a complicated chapter of horrors. Now, Captain Dowell, of the Regulars, tells me that a government agent has been murdered just this side the New Mexican line by Kelly. He says (he was in my office yesterday)—that Joe Emmet ran him sixty odd miles—Kelly, I mean—wounded his horse and lassoed the wretch.

Captured him squarely, handcuffed and brought him into Hawley's township, gave him in charge of eight men—soldiers and subalterns—while he posted on to Dover to bring down the sheriff and some other legal tenders; and as true as my name is Keith, he tricked and escaped them all; freed himself from his wristlets—twisted them in two, they said, swam the river, and Joe was ready to burst with fury."

"What do you think of it? Isn't it a Munchausenism?"

"Think? I believe when the law finally takes his boots off, they will find a split hoof inside."

"The devil, eh?"

"Who, else can Red Kelly be?"

"History, once or twice, has furnished a parallel to this fiend."

"Hardly. His name is a terror to the whole border."

"What territory has the honor of being his birth-place."

"It is not known whether the south germinated him, or the slummy places of New York; or, yet again, the frontier may have cradled him in the cocoon state: and the most terrifying fact of the case is, you and I, Griff, may have sat down and ate with him in lukewarm or welcome fellowship."

"I know if half the stories told of him are true, we may have wagged his hand in cordial greeting; ugh! the thought is conducive of chills. And if Champ's affirmations are correct, Isabel Poinson is in the hands of this fiend."

Griff was woefully in the dark concern-

...or others, that you... and deception expose you to the most deadly peril. We, of the detective force, are included in the cry of 'down,' or up, rather, 'with the Vigs.,' and I wouldn't like to depart this life at the bidding of such miscreants."

"Nor I; but what is to be will be, you know; and, see here, Keith, will you not dispose of previous prejudice, and set a few of our fellows upon the look-out for this missing woman? You can consider what poor Dick would have done under like circumstances, and enter the service with mild but persistent endeavor."

"I will, certainly, if for no other purpose, to convince myself upon the subject."

Griff in one direction, Keith in another, endeavored to find the least clue to the whereabouts of the lost woman. They were obliged to conclude, after several weeks of fruitless endeavors, that all trail was lost. Flamm's whereabouts was entirely unknown. He had settled up business matters, after hearing from the friends of De Lancy, and departed. The last word had of him was when he called at the house, requesting Isabel Poinson to join himself, Dewey and Attorney Dowell at the office, concerning some business papers. But if he were found, what would it avail, as she had never reached the appointed place? and Martha, Col. Dewey's housekeeper, was not sure—her eyesight being dim—if the man who called had indeed been De Lancy's partner. She supposed it to be Flamm, and had so informed Miss Poinson.

He had said:

"Dewey and Flamm, tell Miss Isabel, require her presence a short time at the office. Say that I would tarry to keep her company, but I must get around and notify Lawyer Dowell."

Griff had written to Flamm, at Detroit, his general head-quarters; but at the end of ten days the letter had been returned. The postmaster there wrote that Flamm was somewhere in New Mexico; but he probably knew nothing of the affair, as the appointment at the office had been a base fabrication. Col. Dewey, fortunately, had a photograph of Isabel. This was given into the hands of an artist, and extensively reproduced, so that the detectives, employed by Griff, each held her counterfeit shadow, and knew for whom to look.

"I shall wait but a few weeks longer, and then I shall go down to New Mexico and see Flamm. I don't feel satisfied in not saying more to him about the whole affair."

"I shall see you again before you leave?"

"Certainly; as I have not yet given up the hope of finding some trace of her hereabouts."

Keith was as interested, although for different purposes, as Griff. His well-rooted belief that she knew who was poor Dick's assassin, caused him to take the trail as perseveringly as young Hume.

How very, very vain proved the tricks of the trade in this case. Isabel Poinson was, apparently, as if she had never been.

CHAPTER XIX.

At Dixley, five miles from Dover, there was a meeting of friends and fellow-travellers.

"An' of here ain't Vitee. Bless yer soul, Lingum, how air ye? Harty an' meller, an' with a most eggstatic countenance. I'm allus tickled—tickled to ther pint ov anguish when I find my ole cronies grindin' buckits an' buffeler in the same world with me. The other kentry is looked urpon mostly as a long ways off, an' a dim an' solem vally an' dark river ter git across; an' it cums over me qualmish when a boon companion's started out, of how soon I'll hev ter take ther trail myself. These ere solemenitious reflections intrude—come in an' set down."

They were just outside the barracks.

"It is a long time, old fellow, since I have known of your direct whereabouts until a week ago, and then I made it my express business to find you and ask you to come into Dover and see my wife. She told me, 'Bring Champ back, if you have to follow his footprints to the Pacific Ocean.'"

"Your wife?" and Champ rolled up his eyes until he hid his grizzly brown under his "sugar loaf." "Your wife? Cerlestial winds an' Loddy massy! What hain't er been goin' on whilst I was amblin' amid the goose-flesh—at a ventur'—the pimply backbone ov ther Great West? Why, I've seed considerbul in my leetle trip; hev jiggled about on boshback, an' pronged over severall fishons, but I hain't been ne'er so nigh winded ez at hearin, this. Yer hain't turned Benny Dick an' tuk yer huffs off ther trail entirely? Oh, Vitee, yer've disturbed my faith in human natur'."

And Champ, with his brows still tucked under his "sugar-loaf," seemed determined never again to move them down in place over his eyes. He carried one corner of his mouth up toward his ear, and altogether distorted his face, as if he were swallowing an uncommonly bitter pill.

Vitee found himself unable to repress a laugh.

Champ took down the right corner, and sent up the left end of his mouth like a sled runner.

"Don't, Vitee, don't; it may be a laffin' matter ter you, but its disasllution ter me an' ther trade. Think of yer five years' scrummages, Vitee; think er them filli-busterin' Komanches;" and Champ sprang to his astonishing height, and went on in a wild manner that called up the straggling soldiers. "Think of them playful Apashays and them singin' Sioux, er trottin' on their race-course unmolested, crossin' and recrossin' ther places where yer've spilt yer blud like water, an' hed ter lay by and make it up on tough buffeller; and then, Vitee—bless yer soul, Lingum, how *ken* ye? But thar, why garble? Ye hev a-ready forsuke an' left the fraternity. Oh, marsy! Loddy marsy! why did yer?"

The scout here doubled himself and sat down as suddenly as he had arisen.

"Don't be troubled, old boy," was Vitee's hearty response, "the trade of scout and guide is mine, and I shall not trouble myself to learn another."

"Oh, hur-rah, hur-rah! But thar, why should I inflate my windpipe? This merryin' these women folks, kills out or coaxes out of er man ther spirit of wild adventur'. They brung us inter civilizashun an'"—absently stroking his straggling beard, almost s gray as the fox-tail plume upon his cap —"whar was Sarmpsun, as ther chaplain ov ler fort preached about—whar was he arter la wife had trimmed him up purty? Ah, itee, yer partickler spiled fur ther trade"

"Now, just see here, Champ, your enormous talk against womenkind leads e to suspect that somewhere in the past me fickle fair one has shorn your head a host of sweet fancies."

The scout took a sudden hitch around, as to look at his comrade; and that ook—Vitee never saw it equalled. The aring eyes, the humped-up brows, the nlsing nostrils and distended mouth—ah, he best man-gorilla in the zoological garens could not outgrimace Champ as he ejaculated—

"Say that over agin, Vitee; say it slow an' solum, an' lemme see of I ken find out what yer torking about."

A roar of laughter from the assembled company followed this retort; then Vitee explained—

"You must come into Dover with me. You have seen and are well acquainted with my wife."

"Shaw!"

"Yes, and she wants you to come without delay."

"Your wife!—*me* to cum without delay. Vitee, I never knew you ter talk drunk afore. Yas, I'll go, sarting. I'm curus myself, as thar's scarcely a white woman in my reccommembrance as would be likely to know me. Come on, Vitee, I ken tell better arter I've seed the woman whuther yer one on us, or belong to t'other company."

On the way, Champ suddenly broke out:

"She ain't—nowise likely—she ain't Mariah Bradford?—in course, not."

"Oh, no, no, Champ. I have quite a tale to tell you. You have known me as a downcast sort of a fellow for years."

"Not chirpy-like, 'tis true, but a firm foot, clear eye, an' ready hand—them's ther prime qualifercations ter cumbat ther free-riders. Go on."

"Eight years ago, after a somewhat unusual acquaintance and brief courtship, I married a girl of fifteen."

"Eight year ago," chimed in Champ. "Loddy marsy! I ain't sure, then, but what matrimony ez the state ter develope the fight in a man—eh? Go on."

"There were family storms outside of us two, when the somewhat hurried and secret marriage was known, but as we loved each other, we should have got on bravely, had it not been for a third party in the form of a covetous old uncle, who made Leonora believe that I had inveigled her into marriage in order to secure her property, she being quite an heiress in her own right. Coldness and estrangement ensued, and made desperate by those charges against me, I concluded to vindicate myself by leaving her, which I did without either warning or explanation.

"The delighted uncle proposed and urged divorce.

"My desertion wounded both her pride and affection. She consented to be freed from the rascally adventurer, as the irate uncle termed me. So far all had worked to please the grasping relative; but when he brought up a man of his own choosing —a sort of fossil-remain of his boon companions, and presented him to my girl, the old love which she had felt for me—I give her own words, Champ—rushed like a flood over her heart. How bitterly she repented being influenced by her uncle I cannot tell, but his last stratagetic feat aroused every particle of womanhood within her.

"She commanded the subject of another marriage to be dropped between them; the uncle persisted; no doubt, in some manner he was in the power of the rather venerable wooer, and, finally, Leonora became alarmed for her own safety and that of a dearly beloved relative—both of them, by a short-sighted father, having been left in the guardianship of the misorly man.

"She and I lived together two years before my desertion, which brought her into her eighteenth year. Soon after her divorce, when the persecutions of her relative and the persistent suitor began, she would be eighteen, and come in possession of her property. As I said, she became alarmed, if not for her life, for her liberty; and concealing her intentions, she drew her money and with her young relative fled westward, having a faint, longing, lingering hope that in this vast country she might meet her disloyal spouse. For about four years she changed localities often, but yet faithfully superintended her young relative's education.

"Some months ago, she was astounded upon discovering her persevering lover or foe—whichever view you have of it—lurking near, and dogging her footsteps. During her residence here at the west, however, she had accidentally learned that her father's youngest brother—a wild, headstrong, disinherited, but very good-hearted man—was much farther on toward the Pacific Slope; and with the intuitive knowledge that with him she could be assured of protection, she started on and *we met*. But I am in the greatest haste for your arrival at our place. You'll be so astonished and pleased."

Champ, as he strode beside his companion, cast sundry odd glances from the corners of his eyes toward him.

"He ain't drunk," he soliloquized, "he ain't one ov ther swiggers; but what on airth duz all him? Seems *ef* I must laff, but I darsin't—wall, wall, we'll see! we'll see!"

The scout was ushered into a tastefully furnished room in a neat, unpretentious house in rapidly-growing Dover; and with much interest awaited the entrance of Vitee's wife. Vitee himself had gone to bring her in.

She entered, and her husband, with the rather unique introduction, "This is the woman who wanted to see Champ," led her up to him. He looked up, and beheld a slight, graceful figure, whose cheeks, glowing with a vivid blush, lent additional light to the soft, bright, laughing eyes.

She extended both hands.

"Dear old Champ," she said, "there isn't one glance of recognition in his fierce old orbs."

He took the two extended hands in his rough grasp. It wasn't likely that he would refuse to take what Vitee's wife had offered, and from his slender height he gazed steadfastly upon her. She still raised her laughing eyes to his, and her glowing cheeks flushed deeper carmine. Champ held her hands in an iron grasp. Never was he so troubled to decipher the particular tribe to which any party of free-riders might belong, if they were so distant as to appear like gnats dancing along the rim of the horizon, as to call up the when and the where that he had previously looked upon these velvety eyes before him, and the soft, silken curls of brown hair.

"I've heard fellars argy about ther transmograshun—or sum such term—ov soles. It mought, an' it moughtn't be, that in sich state we've met. Suttingly I've seed her eyes," to Vitee, "but it mought be as they b'longed to er antelope, or elk, or deer as I've shot—never in wonton sport—never, purty eyes—only as dire needcessity driv me to it.' *Ef*—"

Vitee, who had most intensely enjoyed the interview, suddenly lifted a hat from the table near—a broad-brimmed, rather battered hat, and advancing up to his wife with a dexterous movement, gave it an inimitable slouch, and placed it upon her head.

"If we only had the rest of the garb, Lenny."

Champ began backing off—retreating, forgetful that he held Mrs. Vitee's hands in his, and thus drawing her after him until he suddenly sank upon a seat in which his vaunted "shuger-lofe" sat up as large as life, and which his pressure crushed into a sort of mutilated rosette.

"Loddy massy! sheet lightenin' an' the send of airth! this ain't Lee Felix?"

"'Lenny F. Vitee,' she writes her name now, Champ," said her husband; and then he added, in a jocular manner—

"Yes, Lenny, kiss him; I know you want too, and I can spare one to the best friend a man ever had."

The old scout quit his grasp of the smiling woman, and held both his hands before him, exclaiming—

"Don't, yer; don't yer; I ain't fit, Lord, no, I ain't deservin.' Don't yer?"

The pretty woman, thus exorcised, stepped aside from his outstretched hands, and bending over his chair kissed him twice, once on the forehead and once on the cheek.

Champ shrunk down in his seat subdued. A sceptre, a crown, a throne offered him by a prince of any kingdom or realm under the sun, would not have so affected him.

"I remember the plains, Champ," said this woman's soft clear tones, "and the bleeding hands that bore Vitee along so tenderly, and the nights of painful vigils to ward off danger from his helplessness, and how can I ever repay you?"

"Don't, don't," exclaimed the hero, "don't! that hurts wuss nor ther wounds. Ain't Vitee ther friend ov my heart? And Loddy marsy!" as some sudden recollections swept over him, "they war a rough set, an' nowise gingerly in speech, an' at a ventur', what er life yer lived in camp with us fellows."

"No matter, Champ, so long as I knew my disguise was complete; and if the worst came I had only to throw it off, and throw myself on Vitee's mercy."

"No wonder yer screeched over him so when ther fight was thickest! Yer knowed him all ther time?'

"From the moment when you brought us into the camp."

"I recommember now that sumbody gin er yap at ther time, but I thought nothin' on it pertickelar—an' whar's Rob? I should er thought that he'd brung yer out."

"He would, only my name of Leonora had always allowed him to call me Len, or Lenny; and, too, he realized the danger from which we were fleeing."

It is needless to say that Champ did not recover his equilibrium, even after he had tramped a long distance from Dover. He had a dull, realizing sense that somehow, somewhere, in this romantic transaction, he had been defrauded. Was it that Vitee's affections had a delightful centre, which *he* dimly perceived was better than to live friendless and die alone and unlamented; *his* actual present and probable future? Let the questions rest unanswered.

They did not deem it necessary to tell the old scout the particulars, which the gentle reader will like to learn, how when Vitee was well of his wounds, and about to take to the plains again, Lenny had won him to tell his history, so that she might judge of his present feelings in regard to herself—how she had learned that if the soreness of his sorrow was passed, he had thought of no other affection to replace the old. And his dismay at the supposition that she might have procured a divorce in all these years, convinced the faithful woman that, unconsciously to himself, perhaps, he had cherished the hope of reunion. She had gradually won from him, by a plausible and apparently fanciful tale of her own exploits and dangers, what his reception of his wife under similar circumstances would be, and confiding her story to Captain Darnley's wife at the fort, she had procured a suit of women's garments, and throwing aside all disguises, had habited herself in them and come upon Vitee's gloomy evening musings like a meteor of light.

The reunited pair, whose hearts had never wandered far asunder, the next day repaired to the nearest town and were again wedded.

Never an enthusiastic knight felt more exalted with a mark of honor presented him by his sovereign, than did Champ with the kiss given him by Vitee's wife, and there was no danger nor enterprise that he would not have undertaken for her sake. He remembered her courage and patient endurance upon the plains, so in contrast with the usual preconceived ideas of woman; and now he witnessed the soft sweetness of womanhood, unmarred by her period of rough and dangerous experience; and we repeat that Champ felt that somewhere or somehow he had been defrauded of life's rarest enjoyment.

Perhaps, even when pursued and made to run for life, or when the tide of savage warfare had caused him to beat an inglorious and mortifying retreat, he had never felt such a sense of defeat within his soul as tormented him now.

Rough, uneducated, and with vanished youth, family affections now were beyond his reach. Alas! alas! for the unsatisfied longings of the soul. How much softer and gentler is made the affectionate heart through love! How much harder and more bitter is the calloused nature without it!

For the joy of the Heaven of Heavens will prove
The holy responses of loving for love.

(*To be continued in our next. Commenced in No. 5.*)

The Latest Hero.

Burke was mistaken! The age of chivalry is not passed. Heroism takes on different forms at different periods, and in various climes, but ever, in all communities, there are some who are in the highest and best sense chivalrous. Chas. H. Roscoe, an engineer on the Providence and Springfield Railroad, is entitled to the credit of performing a generous and daring feat which few would have attempted, and fewer still, perhaps, would have been able successfully to complete. On Friday evening, says the "Providence Journal," Mr. James Black, of Pascoag, accompanied by two other men and his son, went in a boat upon the reservoir, fishing. The night was dark, foggy and rainy; the boat was overturned and the occupants thrown into the water.

One man swam for and reached the shore for aid; Mr. Black and his son were drowned; the fourth person clung to the boat, a half mile from shore, for two and a half hours, shouting for help. No one dared brave the darkness and danger of the hour. At last, Mr. Roscoe heard of the casualty, and seizing a lantern hurried to the scene. Realizing the urgency of the case he sprang into the water and swam to the boat, and found the survivor badly bruised and unable either to keep on top of the boat or to swim ashore. After a short rest Roscoe swam back, towing the boat and man, and as it turned out, the stone by which the boat had been anchored. He thought it a heavy drag at the time, but it lightened more than one heart, his own included.

The saving of that life, under the circumstances, was as genuine a heroism as ever poet sang, and entitles the preserver to rank among the few who in an emergency are quick witted and brave. The body of the boy has been recovered.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A sufferer suggests an improvement in the orthography of the word panics. He thinks it would be better to spell it *pay-nic!*

☞ Nashville, Tenn., has a club of rejected lovers. One of the rules inflicts the penalty of expulsion upon any member who visits the lady who once rejected him.

☞ The following advertisement appeared in a Cincinnati paper, fifty years ago: "Passengers wanted.—A wagon will start for New York city in about two weeks. Five passengers will be accommodated at $25 each."

☞ The Supreme Court of New York has just decided that a man can pick all the fruit from a tree growing on his own land, though it hang over on a neighbor's land. The question is an old and oft-disputed one.

☞ The editor of the Huntsville, Mo., Herald, pops the question in his paper in this public fashion: "There's a certain girl in this town who can carry our smoke-house keys for life if she'll only say the word."

☞ A lonesome-looking old man called at the Washington Savings Bank in Savannah, the other day, and deposited his money, because he knew "that George would never let his bank bust."

☞ A family, consisting of a widowed mother, three sons and two daughters, were all married at once in Cincinnati last Friday. The cost of the rites was put at wholesale rates.

☞ The Hungarian prince, Charles Esterhazy, who recently committed suicide, had long been suffering from a spinal complaint said to be incurable. During the absence of his sister, with whom he lived, in a moment of melancholy and despair he took up a revolver and fired a bullet through his heart, causing instantaneous death.

☞ The Court Journal says that Miss Jerome, a New York girl, is about to marry Lord R. Churchill, the third son of the Duke of Marlborough. The young lady, who has resided some time in Paris, will receive a splendid dower on her marriage.

☞ Who can read without emotion the story of two little girls in Green Bay, Wis.? The eldest was seven years of age, the youngest only five. A drunken father left them alone in their room for six days with only a small loaf of bread for food. When the children were found the elder sister was nearly dead, having refused to eat of the bread, so that her little sister might not suffer. We hear a great deal of heroines. Does history furnish an example equal to this?

☞ Le Sieur Fromagoot has just died at Ivry, France, of joy. The old man was poor. He suddenly came into a large fortune. He attempted to walk to the house of the Maire, but staggered in his impatience. His excitement was terrible, and his feeble body was not able to bear it. He fell dead. The physicians at the inquest testified that he died from cerebral congestion of the brain, brought on by excessive joy at his accession to fortune.

☞ "Cavalier boots" are about to be introduced for ladies. They are turned over with leather just above the ankle, or as far as may be respectfully the point de mire, so as to give a faint imitation of the old cavalier boot; an edging of lace falls over this.

☞ The clerks in an eastern jewelry establishment were startled recently by an individual who wanted to know if he could have his "entrails" engraved on his watch case.

☞ Chemical analysis has shown that that the poison of the cobra, the most deadly of East India serpents, is identical with the composition of beer yeast. Prussic acid, another deadly poison, is also, we believe, composed of exactly the same elements as sugar.

☞ A Detroit man has painted his dog red because somebody told him that the new law required all licensed dogs to be so distinguished.

☞ A dandy asked a barber's boy if he had ever shaved a monkey. "No, sir," answered the lad; "but if you'll take a seat, I'll *try*."

☞ The latest case of conscience is the retirement of a wealthy London gentleman from a firm of beer brewers because of the evil caused by drink. He has given good evidence of his sincerity by turning missionary to the poor of East London.

☞ An editor in a neighboring city has been reading one of Dr. Hall's "Health Tracts," in which the doctor proves conclusively that married men live longer than bachelors. This journalist says he don't know how it is, for he has been married three times, and yet he knows a bald-headed bachelor who is as twice as old as he is.

☞ There is nothing which women appreciate more than unexpected little presents from their husbands, selected and bestowed with that tact which is the offspring of true tenderness.

☞ FEMALE FORTITUDE.—What do men know about martyrdoms? We should go mad had we to endure the hundredth part of those daily pains which are meekly borne by many women Ceaseless slavery, meeting with no reward; constant gentleness, met by cruelty as constant; love, labor, patience, watchfulness, without even so much as the acknowledgment of a good word; all this, how many of them have to bear in quiet, and appear abroad with cheerful faces, as if they felt nothing?

☞ Remember that there is a vast difference between solid argument and vulgar abuse, and that no amount you may have at command of the latter will ever be able to compensate for a deficiency of the former.

☞ The ingenuity implied by wooden nutmegs in Connecticut has been surpassed by a Maine farmer, who has just been detected in a decidedly greasy swindle. It appears that this fellow, borrowing an idea from the fillers of gold coins, has taken lumps of tallow, covered them with a coating of yellow butter, and then taking the filled balls to market sold them to the traders. Last week his little trick was found out, and he was punished as he deserved.

☞ In Galloway large crags are met with having ancient writings on them. One on the farm of Knockleby has cut deep on the upper side, "Lift me up and I'll tell you more." A number of people gathered to this crag and succeeded in lifting it up, in hopes of being well repaid; but, instead of finding any gold, they found written on it, "Lay me down as I was before.

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GOING TO SLEEP.

Come hither, my baby, my darling,
My lily, my wonderful rose!
The white-bosomed flowers in the garden
Begin their soft petals to close;
The bees have gone home from the clover,
The swallows are under the eaves,
And down in the orchard the robin
Broods over her nest in the leaves.

Come, baby, my beauty, my darling!
Your eyes are heavy with sleep;
Your little red mouth has grown silent,
And scarcely its laughter can keep;
Lay off the white robe from your shoulders,
Unclasp the small shoes from your feet—
O, daintiest blossom of Eden,
I kiss you, my lily, my sweet!

Do you feel the cool wind coming softly,
And see the young moon in the sky;
The clouds sailing over the sunset,
The bats flitting silently by?
Do you hear how the cattle are lowing
Along the green lane by the hill?
And the brook running over the pebbles,
With music that never is still?

Now hush while I sing to you, baby,
A song of the angels above,
That come on invisible pinions
To watch o'er the children they love;
So all through your beautiful dreaming
The voice of your mother shall creep,
Lest, hearing the harpings celestial,
Your soul should fly homeward in sleep!

A SAD STORY.

BY MILLIE W. CARPENTER.

"When the sun sets, to-morrow, be at the stile, by the cross-road."

The people were pouring out of church. The organist was playing some sad, fitful chords, something from The Messiah; and under cover of their melting sweetness, the audacious whisperer bent forward and made this appointment.

The two girls were walking down the aisle side by side. Dora Stevens, for whom the whisper was presumably intended, glanced up a mute look of assent, through her golden curls. But it chanced that Bella Lawrence heard it, too, and a dark cloud drifted over the sunshine of her face; her little hand clenched itself spasmodically under the rich lace of her shawl. After a hard-drawn breath she fell back a step, and glanced coldly over her shoulder into the gentleman's face. He was holding his hat in his gloved hand, and he bowed ceremoniously as his eyes met her.

"Good morning, Miss Lawrence," he said, distantly, but Miss Lawrence held out a tiny hand, which he could not do otherwise than take.

He released it immediately, notwithstanding its clinging touch, but the little hand was not to be so repulsed. It fluttered to his arm, and rested there. They were standing very close together in the narrow aisle.

"There is such a crowd," murmured Bella, "and these people never mind where they put their feet. I am sure my flounces are in rags."

Dean Hastings perhaps anathematized first the crowd and next the cherished lace flounces, as Dora Stevens looked back and saw him coming down the steps with the beautiful heiress hanging on his arm in that frightened, appealing manner. But Dora only smiled and nodded brightly as she went her way. It was not till many days after that she recalled that significant scene.

Each of these three people, when once in the open air, went their way homeward in the mellow and bright October sunshine. They were quiet enough to all outward appearances, but when in her own room Bella Lawrence threw her hat from her, and grasped at the lace collar around her throat as if it were choking her. She paced up and down the floor with clenched hands until she was worn out, then pausing before the pier-glass she bent forward and looked at herself long and earnestly.

"Youth and beauty," she murmured. "It is said that youth and beauty will work wonders for their possessor. But what have they done for me? They cannot win for me the love I want; the love he gives to that pale, spiritless working-girl. Pah! it makes me sick to think of her." She threw out her arms with a passionate gesture of sorrow. "Dean, Dean! I love you! I love you!" she cried. "Why do you not see it? or do you see it? and is it because of your contempt for me that you turn away so cold and unmoved?" She struck her hand passionately on the marble slab, and though the bruised flesh turned purple, she never once felt the pain. "He, too, shall suffer!" she cried. "Let him take care!" The face at which she looked in the glass was far less fair than it had been a moment since, when the tender mood was on her. Her great, dark eyes flashed fiercely, a hot flush burned on her soft, round, olive cheeks, and through her full red lips her narrow, sharp-pointed white teeth gleamed vindictively. It was no fable that in her school-days she had been nicknamed "The Cat," and that her companions had given her full credit for all of a cat's spiteful nature when angered. She walked to the window, and stood looking thoughtfully out. What a lovely scene it was. The house was on the outskirts of the town, and hill and vale stretched out before her, and waving woodlands, tinted with autumn's unrivalled colors. Along the line of the river spires and clustered chimneys marked the site of her father's factories—milestones on the road to wealth. "It is all mine," she murmured. "It will be mine in time, and I would give it all to him with this"—she lifted her diamond-circled hand. "I would give it to him, and he rejects it." Then her quick mood changed again. The flush died out of her cheeks, her head drooped, and tears crowded into her proud, dark, eyes. "Dean, Dean, I would give you the tenderest, truest love a woman ever proffered. Oh, why do you despise it?"

There came a light rap at the door.

"Miss Bella, your father is asking for you in the library."

And five minutes afterward Bella went down the stairs, pondering, with gathered brows and her finger on her lip. * *

Do you think the Father of all Wickedness is in league with such of his children as would forward his evil designs on earth? Does he make the way smooth for them when they abandon themselves to working out their fierce passions of hatred and revenge? Our forefathers used to believe much in these alliances of earth and the devil; and though our modern philosophy rejects much that our ancestors taught in such stern faith, yet we are at times fain to believe that though the devil may not be in league against us, the good angel which we love to think watches over us is at times far off from us—very, very far off from us.

The next morning, at a late hour, Miss Bella Lawrence walked into the great counting-room of Lawrence & Lawrence. Her father was not in, but Dean Hastings, the chief clerk, was at his desk. It was no uncommon thing for the beautiful daughter of his employer to bring her sunny smile thither, lighting up the dingy walls and passages consecrated to Mammon. She came quietly up, unmindful of the admiring glances bestowed upon her by the junior clerks, and Dean rose and stood with a certain cold air of respect to receive her.

"Papa is unable to come out this morning, Mr. Hastings; he is confined to his room with the gout, and he has sent me with a message."

Her voice was as distant as his look while she stood before him, resting her hand on the railing of a chair which he pushed forward. His handsome eyes were fixed deferentially on her face; but there was no warmth in them; there was not one shadow of tenderness in his manner toward her, and she knew it, and felt her heart at the knowledge grow deadly cold with hate and anger.

"You are to go to New York this morning to look after the last cargo of cotton shipped by the New Orleans Company. Your instructions are here," and she handed him a little note. "I don't know whether he mentions it, but you are to copy the last bill sent in previous to this, and I am to take it home to papa."

She was watching him steadily and she noticed the frown of annoyance which contracted his forehead at these unlooked-for orders. He glanced at the clock hanging over his desk. There were just thirty minutes for him to get to the morning train down. And there was the bill to copy, and his papers to gather up, and he must run into his rooms, which were fortunately on the direct route to the station, and tumble a few necessary articles into a bag. How provoking! why could not Mr. Lawrence have given him more time? Dora would look for him in vain "when the sun sets, at the stile." There was not even time to drop her a note and he had no messenger to carry it; he could not depend on the post-office, for the post-office was, naturally, in the most inconvenient part of the town, on the opposite side, quite remote from the business centre. He must wait and write from New York.

While he was thinking all these tumultuous thoughts at once, Bella was watching his handsome face; he pushed forward again the chair.

"If you will sit down a few minutes, Miss Lawrence, I will have the bill ready for you. I see my time is very short."

He dipped his pen into ink and began to write. Scratch! scratch! Tick! tick! how that horrid clock hurried the minutes away. If he could only stop it. If he could only put out his hand and stop those bits of steel which were whirling his time away so fast. If he could only stop time itself. But no! He wrote on! he got the figures wrong, and had to tear up the bill and begin another. At last it was finished, and flushed and excited he brought it to Bella.

"I am sorry you have so little time," she said, sweetly, "but papa only got the despatch at the last moment, and I came down at once."

"It makes no difference," he answered, awkwardly. He was trying to think clearly; Bella looked so sweet, so womanly at that moment; might he trust her? trust her with his secret, and to carry a note to Dora? He blushed horribly as he stammered out: "I—I wonder if I could trust you, Miss Bella—I mean, trouble you—it is very awkward asking you, but I have so little time, and I wish to send a note to a very dear friend—"

"Pray do not say another word," interrupted Bella. "How could you doubt me? Write your note at once and let me take it." She pointed laughingly at the clock as a warning for him to make all haste.

Dean rushed to his desk again. There was no trouble about the flow of words this time. The sweet love thoughts leaping from his heart to his pen swept in an unbroken current along the paper. His face was all aglow with tenderness, and Bella's frown grew darker.

She took the note when he handed it to her and glanced at the superscription with a gravity that was very becoming to her.

"I will see to it at once! You need have no uneasiness about it, Mr. Hastings," she said, and he answered:

"I have trusted you with a very precious secret, Miss Lawrence," and then he flew away with only ten minutes left him to save his train.

"When the sun sets," Dean had whispered in Dora's ear; and just as the sun was sinking below the western hills she crossed the garden of her father's home and turned into the meadow path leading to the stile.

Her heart, her foolish girlish heart was very light, and as she skipped along through the rustling leaves, she sang so lightly, oh, some pretty silly nonsense about the lasses oh, which one Robby Burns wrote many years ago; wrote perchance in days when he too sat by the stile with his Highland Mary and watched the poppies nodding in the corn.

Dora was singing along, and as she drew near the trysting place she saw a shadow as of some one waiting, standing half-hidden by the trailing wild grape vines. The shadow stirred, and at sound of Dora's footsteps a figure turned and bent forward, and a voice, oh, what a different voice from that Dora had expected to hear, murmured:

"Dean, is it you? Have you come back?"

It was Bella Lawrence who spoke. It was Bella Lawrence who confronted Dora's pale, surprised face with a face quite as surprised and a great deal whiter—for it was a hazardous game she was playing—and with a perfectly studied confusion in her manner.

Dora sank down on the step. Hot tears of disappointment which she could not suppress flooded her eyes and dropped on her white cheeks.

"You—you here, Miss Lawrence?" she said, with struggling breath. "I don't understand—and you spoke of Dean."

Bella assumed a quick, frightened air.

"You must not betray us. You know my father is so proud, and Dean is only his clerk—but I love him so—and we have so few opportunities to meet. You must not blame me, Miss Stevens, or think harshly of me for coming here at times to meet him. We shall not always have to be so secret; when I am of age my money will be all my own, and then we can claim each other. He told me this morning he should be unable to keep his appointment, but I came hither to think of him, and at the last moment I thought he had repented and come. Oh! how happy I was when I heard your footsteps. How happy! Oh, me, me!"

Bella clasped her soft hands together in a tender transport as she spoke, and Dora Stevens listened with wide, wild eyes, while word following after word of that cruel lie fell on her quivering heart and smote her with a deathly keen, cold pain whose sting clung to her for days and weeks after. And the words were fitly chosen. The girl's allusion to her money cut swift and close; Dora bit her lips to keep from crying out then. She was only a poor clerk's daughter; her only dowry her tender heart and sweet wild rose face, and her great absorbing love for the man who was false to her.

Without one word she rose and turned to go, but Bella caught her by the arm and held her.

"Wait, you act so strangely. Why look so wildly at me. You won't betray us;" promise me that you will not betray us.

Dora drew proudly back.

"I never betray. You have my word. I never broke it yet!" she threw up her hands with a sudden cry.

"Oh, God! God! help me to bear this pain!" and then she fell down in a heap on the grass, and bowed her fair golden head on her knees, and rocked herself back and forth with wild hysterical sobs, and long drawn panting breaths; all under those cruel, unrelenting eyes above her.

"What do you mean by this weeping," asked Bella, sternly. "What is the matter? It is possible—but no, it cannot be. Yet he has more than once hinted of a something that might come between him and me—some irksome, half-forgotten old amusement that still clung to him, no matter how much he strove to shake it off. Is it you? can it be you, you foolish girl?"

Dora drew herself up white as death, and lifted a warning hand.

"Stop! I will not hear another word. I do not stand between you and your false lover; for he *is* false, false and cowardly. You need not fear me. I have no money to keep him, and he is free; I will never speak to him again. Never; tell him so. Never again."

She ran swiftly home. But that night she burst into Bella's room, pale, wild-eyed, with a shawl bound round her head, and laid a note before her. A hasty, blotted, fiercely written letter; a letter written, in that passionate hour, oh, how cruelly, and likely after it was received to put all the wide world between her and her lover.

"It is my renouncement!" Dora cried. "You send it to him, you know where he is, and bid him never answer it. Let him have honor enough never to speak to me, never to look at me again."

Poor, hasty letter! you may be very sure it was sent to its destination without delay, and when Dean Hastings read it his face seemed moulding into iron. He read it over twice, and then bending his forehead on his hands, he sat for a long half hour thinking.

As a result of his thoughts he went in search of Mr. Lawrence, who had come down the night before to look after his cargoes.

"Mr. Lawrence," said Dean, huskily. "I have been thinking over the proposition you made to me this morning, and I have changed my mind. If you are of the same opinion still, I will accept your offer and go over to Liverpool to act as your resident agent there. I will, moreover, go in the steamer that leaves this evening."

Mr. Lawrence looked at him curiously.

"This is sudden, Hastings; I am of the same opinion, of course, and right glad to send you out; but it is sudden. Anything wrong? anything I can help you out of?"

"Nothing!" Dean answered firmly. "Nothing that you can help."

But when he was alone he dropped his face on his arms, flung out across the table, and cried as men are not apt to cry, and as they do not cry more than once a life-time.

So Dean Hastings sailed in the evening's steamer for Liverpool, and the two women he left behind him heard of it the day after. Of the two it is hard to say which fared the worst in her sorrow; only I suppose it is better to mourn with a clean conscience than a foul one; and I doubt if Bella Lawrence knelt by her bed in prayer that night as the other one did pleading, "Lord watch over him and protect him; keep him from all harm."

Time went on, and at the end of two years Bella was married. Her ill-starred passion, dead, of its very hopelessness, she gave her hand to a suitor, wealthy, brilliant, heartless. She went aboard with him, and lived gayly in the great capitals of Europe, admired and sought after, and unhappy as was fitting.

Dora, waiting, stayed at home. She had offers of marriage which she refused. She would not own that there was any hope in life of that old love, and yet unconsciously she lived on always hoping. Till one day there came to her a newspaper with a single paragraph marked in black, and there she read the death in London of Dean Hastings.

Till then she had not realized how great a part in her life he filled, and folding her hands she wept lonely tears.

With the paper came a letter from Bella Lawrence Seymour confessing the lie she told, and the part she acted two years ago, and with that letter, too, one written to her—a last, long, loving, forgiving and beseeching letter—found in Dean Hastings's desk, and forwarded by Mr. Lawrence. All was explained at last.

"When the sun sets!" I sometimes picture Dora Stevens, a solitary woman's figure, standing in the sunset with her hand shading her eyes, and looking out across the sea beyond which her lover lies in an alien grave. The light lies on the hill-tops far behind her, but around her all is in shadow.

"I loved him!" she sometimes cries in passionate remembrance. "I loved him, and he loved me, and he died, thinking I was false to him. Oh, is there anything in life or death harder than that?"

Then she cries, "Do you think he knows now? Do you think all things are made plain in that other world? are all the mysteries that perplex us here made plain at last?"

Ah, who can tell her? who knows?

ANY EXCUSE IN A STORM.

Sweet Emmeline to her love, who is enjoying a nice sail—"Do you feel sea-sick, Richard, dear?"

Richard (with wonderful bravery)—"No, no. Umph! I think the oysters I had for breakfast this morning must have been alive."

DOWN THE CLIFF.

BY JACK RATLIN.

A long stretch of sandy beach, with brown rocks peeping out from the shining sand, and two figures walking slowly up and down in the fading light. One a man, tall and strong, a sailor every inch, who had braved the tempest since boyhood, with a frank, manly face, and bold, generous eyes. Such a man as we instinctively trust—one of those grand natures who make the world better for having lived in it.

And the woman. Ah, God gives few women such a face as thine, Madge Dare. The fading sunlight falling on her brown locks seemed to give a golden shadow to her clustering hair. The face was a little browned by exposure to the sea-breeze; but it was faultlessly regular, and her eyes, blue as the sea-waves, seemed of unfathomable depth. The rosy lips just parted by her fragrant breath displayed pearly teeth, and her figure was perfect. And to add to her charms her face bore the stamp of perfect innocence of heart and mind.

They walked hand in hand as only lovers walk, and a shade of melancholy showed itself upon both faces. And why? Because thay loved each other dearly, and must part, he to cross the ocean on a distant and hazardous voyage, leaving her to watch and wait until the white sails of his ship showed on the distant horizon coming back to the Jersey shore.

"And you *must* go, Willie," she said, mournfully.

"Why not, little one?" he said, as gayly as he could. "This voyage will be the making of me, and when it is over I shall claim you as my own. Let us think of that, my love, my darling, when I am on the sea, and you are waiting here."

"I never felt so sad before when the time came for you to sail," said Madge as her lover drew her closer, and she laid her bright head on his shoulder. "But this time in spite of myself I seem to feel a presentiment that all is not right, and that some fearful peril hangs over you upon this voyage."

"Why this time more than another, Madgie?" he answered. "Do not chill my hopes by evil prophesies now, as I am going to sea."

"It is foolish to believe in dreams," she replied; "but last night I dreamed that I saw you starving in a dark cave, while a man stood over you laughing at your agonies."

"Capital, Madgie; perhaps you can tell me who the man was, and then I can guard against him," he said, jestingly.

"You would only laugh at me; but I did see his face in my dream."

"Who was it?"

"James Warner," she replied, turning her face away. "There; do not laugh at me, Willie. I know that it is only a dream, and we have no reason to think that James is not your friend; but I have seen him looking at me sometimes in a way I did not like, and—"

"Ha-ha-ha!" laughed Will Frazier. "If I quarrel with every man who admires your face I shall have trouble enough on my hands. James Warner, my mate, the man who saved my life in the Friendly Islands when the spear head was at my throat. No, no, Madgie; whatever else may threaten me, I have nothing to fear from *him*."

So they went away down the shining sands; and a man, who had been lying prostrate in the shadow of a rock, rose slowly and looked after them with a dark, threatening look. A man who would have been handsome, but for the cruel look which hovered about his thin lips.

"And you warn him against me, my girl?" he muttered. "Is there such a thing as prophesy after all, and has Madge Dare the gift? Before the Osprey comes back from her cruise we shall know."

Two hours later, and the schooner Osprey, William Frazier, master, and James Warner, first mate, had spread her wings for her distant flight among the seal islands far to the south—and Madge Dare waited in doubt and trouble for tidings from the sea.

* * * * *

The Osprey had done her work, and was lying in the shelter of the Falklands, while they refitted for the homeward voyage—and the captain and mate went up among the rocky highlands on a hunt, to while away the time. Throughout the voyage, no one could have done his duty better than James Warner; and Frazier had laughed in secret at the very idea that his mate could wish him harm. They slung their muskets. And Warner threw a coil of rope about his shoulders, for he said that they might find penguin's eggs among the ledges, which they could not reach without a line. The captain carried a small basket.

"I suppose you are to be married as soon as you get back, Will?" said the mate, as they went up through the rugged defiles.

"Oh, yes," was the answer. "We have had glorious luck; and let me get the cargo of the Osprey safe into port, and I ask no more. Is not Madgie a dear little creature; and am I not in luck?"

"Who gave him the right to tempt me in this way?" muttered Warner, through his set teeth. "I have borne much, but he will drive me too far."

"You don't answer, James. Don't you think Madgie beautiful?"

"Yes," replied Warner, doggedly, turning his face away.

And Will Frazier rattled on in praise of the girl he loved, little dreaming that each word was a dagger in the heart of James Warner. Will saw him finger the lock of his musket, but did not know that the devil was trying to persuade him to do a deed of blood among the lonely defiles of the islands. But the time had not come yet, for the Falkland village was too near, and he was cool even in that moment of deadly rage. They tramped on for miles, getting some of the birds peculiar to the islands, until they came out upon a rocky platform overlooking the sea. Peering over this cliff, Warner saw fifty feet below, a ledge upon which the sea birds had deposited their eggs.

"Shall we have some, cap.?" he asked.

"Just as you like. I would like to roast a few."

"You must go down, then," said Warner. "My head does not feel just right to-day, and I am afraid I should get dizzy."

"That will do, won't it, James? Send down the rope."

But James Warner uttered a fierce laugh, which struck a chill into the heart of the captain.

"Not yet, most noble captain; not yet," he cried. "Do you know that I have you in my power, and that the time of my revenge has come?"

"Your *revenge*; come, come, James, this is beyond a joke. Send down the rope."

"You could not let me rest, you dog!" screamed the mate. "I struggled with temptation, I fought against it with all my power, but you would speak of Madgie. You *would* recall her beauty, and make me remember that but for you I might have won her."

"You loved Madgie!" gasped Frazier. "You, whom I thought my friend."

"I love her so that I am ready to do a murder for her sake. Say your prayers if you have any to say, for in five minutes I shoot you like a dog. You want the rope, do you? There it is"—throwing the end down as he spoke—"but touch it, and you are dead."

"You would not murder me," said Will, sadly. "Well, then, be it so. You will go back to Madgie, but I tell you that whatever else she may do, she will look upon you as my murderer. Have you thought of that?"

With a savage cry the madman caught up his musket and sprang forward, with his finger on the trigger. The loud click of the lock was heard, and Will Frazier folded his arms upon his breast and looked up at the man who was about to murder him, when he staggered forward, and with a loud cry of agony plunged head foremost from the rocks! In his haste he had caught his foot in the trailing rope, and without mercy, with murder boiling in his breast, he fell! Striking the rock within a foot of Will Frazier, he bounded off and went down into the sea five hundred feet below; and Frazier, overcome by emotion, dropped nerveless upon the platform, holding by the dangling rope. Madge is now the wife of Captain Frazier, and at times, as they sit by the winter fire, they think of that fierce heart which ceased to throb among the Falkland Cliffs, and pray that the Master of all may forgive and take him to his rest.

TO-MORROW AND TO-MORROW

BY GLEN CAROL.

You are tired—the day is so warm, you have taken so many stitches, and the book lying upon the table before you looks so tempting. Why not wait until to-morrow to finish your boy's new jacket? A few hours, more or less, can make no difference to Tommy, although his old roundabout *does* look badly, and he begged of you to finish his new one in time for the usual morning school exercises. But you want so much to know what became of Leonora, the heroine of the novel you are eyeing so wistfully, and Tommy will not care much for the disappointment, you try to persuade yourself—so the jacket is laid down, and the book is taken up and not relinquished until twilight creeps between your eyes and its pages. But Tommy *does* care, and as he starts to school next morning in his old, torn jacket, muttering rebellious protests and rubbing his tear-stained eyes, your heart reproaches you, and you feel that you are to blame for his unhappiness. If you had only put that book under lock and key, and pushed from you the demon who whispered "to-morrow," you would have saved your boy and yourself a needless heartache.

Why do we block the pathway of our lives with so many to-morrows? To-day is within our grasp, but to-morrow may never dawn—or if it should, may find us with changed hearts and feebleness of purpose. To-day we have it in our power to do a kindness or a good deed, to perform a duty, but who shall say that the morrow shall surely find us thus entrusted or empowered?

To-day we have our loved ones all around us. It is ours to bestow upon them loving smiles, tender words and fond caresses—ours to minister to their comfort or their pleasure—but whose shall be the task to-morrow?

The morrow of which we all speak, and in which we are to make ample atonement for the wasted *now*, is but a phantom. We are ever approaching, but may never reach it—a shifting will-o'-the-wisp, it lures us on, only to betray us at last; and the paths that lead to the desert of regret, to darkness and desolation, are paved full thickly with treacherous *to morrows!*

☞ No offence is so difficult to pardon as contempt: wrong a man, and he may forgive you; abuse him, and he may forget it; but treat him with contumely, and he is your enemy for life.

☞ A Londoner's present to his bride was one thousand sovereigns on a gold salver, and he had a detective among the guests.

☞ Miss Bunker and Mr. Haynes, a pair of deaf mutes, were united in matrimony in Raleigh, N. C., recently. On their journey home from church the bridal party came very near being drowned while crossing a swollen stream. The bridegroom, who never swam before, rescued his young bride by swimming and carrying her in his arms a distance of several yards to the shore. Miss Bunker is a daughter of Eng, one of the Siamese twins.

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces payment of the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

WE cannot undertake to answer questions relating to the acceptance or rejection of manuscripts in this column. And there is no occasion of writing to ask whether we will examine a manuscript. Send it on, and we will examine it; keeping a copy, to avoid all danger of loss—as we do not hold ourselves responsible for the safe return of manuscript.

H. A., (Potteville, Pa.,) asks: "Will you please answer this in your next? Who is the author of the poem called 'If We Knew?'" The poem mentioned has gone the rounds of the press anonymously. We have never seen it with the author's name attached, and are of the opinion that its authorship is not known to the reading world.

HELMA, (Hudson, Michigan,) says: "A young lady and myself have been having quite a dispute as to the manner of directing a letter, she asserting that a period should be placed only after abbreviations (initials, and at the end of each line, as Mr. John A. Brown, Oswego, N. Y., while I think it should be placed after every word. If you will be so kind as to settle this difficulty you will greatly oblige an old reader of your valuable paper. P. S. I forgot to say that I am in love and don't know how to get out." The lady is partly right. A period should be placed after abbreviations and initials, and commas at the end of all names but the last, where a period should be placed. Thus—Mr. John A. Brown, Oswego, New York. If you wish our advice how to get out of love, we can only say, get married. You will either succeed in getting out of love; or you will be so well satisfied that you will bless us all the rest of your life for our advice.

G. O. L., (Hartonsville, Vt.,) asks: "1st. Are there any mineral springs at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania? 2d. Are they good for rheumatism? 3d. Who would I write to in order to get full information on the subject? The reason why I trouble you with all these questions is this. I have a very dear friend who suffers terribly with rheumatism. Come to think of it I may as well ask about my handwriting, like all the rest." There is a mineral spring at Gettysburg, of whose virtues the proprietors speak in the highest terms. They proclaim it as a specific for rheumatism, and, for that matter, for nearly every other disease. We have no personal knowledge of its qualities, and have heard very contradictory reports concerning it. For fuller information address the proprietors, Whitney Brothers, Glassboro, N. J. Your handwriting struggles too much. It needs condensation.

FOOL BILL writes: "You are so very kind in answering foolish questions that I concluded I would trouble you with a few. 1st. Can you obtain for me the songs entitled Good-Bye, Sweetheart, and Good-night, Good-night, Beloved? Also inform me concerning the price please. 2d. Is there any rule of etiquette as to which arm you should give a young lady when promenading? 3d. Is it not a standard rule that a lady should speak to one first when they meet on the street? 4th. How do you pronounce Pompeii? 5th. How do you pronounce Adeler? 6th. How do you pronounce Ixion? 7th. Can you tell me the author of these lines:

'Of all sad words of tongue or pen
The saddest are these, It might have been?'"

1st. Yes. The price of Good-Bye, Sweetheart, is 30 cents; of the other, 50 cents. 2d. The rule is to give the lady the wall, the gentleman taking the side next the street. 3d. The rule is that the lady should be allowed to speak, or to give some sign of recognition, first. The practice between friends is not to be particular as to which speaks first. 4th. Pronounce Pom-pā'-ye, 5th. Ad'-e-ler. 6th. Ix-ī'-on. Accent the first and third words on the second syllable. 7th. They occur in Whittier's poem of Maud Muller.

M. T., (Ky.,) says: "Having already received much information from your invaluable paper, I beg leave to submit a question, which I hope you will have the kindness to answer soon. It is this. How is Italy governed? Are its inhabitants in bondage? If so is it probable that they will again gain their freedom?" It is governed by a limited monarchy, Victor Emanuel being the present ruler. All Italy is now combined into one political division, having its capital at Rome; and its people enjoy as great a degree of liberty as in any of the similar governments of Southern Europe. This state of affairs, however, has not existed for many years. It was formerly divided into a number of separate States, in some of which the people were much oppressed. Principally at Naples was this system of political oppression practiced, and the amelioration of the country began by driving out the tyrannical king of the Neapolitan State.

O. E. L., (New York,) writes: "I have been a subscriber to your paper for some time, and take the liberty of asking a few questions. I would like to become a circus performer—and would like you to give me the address of some enterprising circus proprietor, say—P. T. Barnum, John Oberen, and others that you may know; and your opinion of it will oblige me much." A letter addressed to P. T. Barnum, New York City, would reach him. We are not posted in regard to other circus managers. They are a peramboluatory set who have no settled P. O. address. Our opinion is, that if you have a genius for tumbling, you are at liberty to follow the *bent* of your genius, even if it leads you to practice the cart-wheel evolution.

ONE WHO KNOWS (Smithville), writes: "I notice in Post of 13th inst., an inquire, by 'S. C.' (Wahsatch, Utah,)' about John Wilkes Booth. You told him that Booth was killed—which is not the case, nor never has been for he is now living, and as fat as a bear. Somebody was killed—but I assure you it was not J. W. B. Please inform S. C., through correspondents' column, as he is so anxious to know." Why does not our knowing correspondent supplement his interesting bit of information, by telling us where J. W. B. is living, and all the particulars of his adventures since the time he was killed, in the newspapers. We should have been glad of the opportunity to publish such an account, and so have got even with the "correspondent" who wrote the romantic description of Booth's adventures in China and the South Sea Islands, which is just now going the rounds of the papers. It looked to us a rather prosy story to make the Great Unknown the chief of a band of cannibals. We have no doubt you could beat that hollow. In fact, in the dozen resurrections which have been made of J. W. B., to our knowledge, we have never seen any yet that quite met our taste for romance. We do hope you have a truthful narrative that will beat them all—and that you will give us the chance to print it.

E. L., (Ohio,) writes: "Will autumn leaves keep their color when varnished? and must they be varnished all over?" Yes. Press them, and dry them thoroughly, and then varnish all over carefully. They will be "a thing of beauty, and a joy" for a good while. Whether "forever" we cannot say—never having kept them that long.

AMY DALE, (Somers, Ill.,) says: "Please answer the following. 1st. Can any person, not having any musical talent, by continual practice become a good musician? 2d. Which are the best and most profitable books for young people to read. 3d. What do you think of my handwriting? 4th. Is the "Toilers of the Sea" Victor Hugo's last novel? 5th. Is Mr. Disraeli living yet?" 1st. Such a person might perhaps become an ordinary performer. A large portion of musical performance is mechanical, which any one may master with sufficient practice. Those who have a talent for music, have a power of expression which cannot be gained by practice alone. 2d. A great variety of books might be named. Almost any branch of what is usually called solid reading, is useful to cultivated minds—and a proper proportion of good fiction is also very useful. 3d. Not very good. 4th. No. He has written since, "L'Homme Qui Rit; or, The Man Who Laughs," and another, just published. 5th. Yes.

P., (Pennsylvania,) writes: "Some one asks, in your correspondents' column, how to preserve without sugar. I fancy they meant without boiling the sugar. This is done by boiling the fruit alone, for fifteen minutes, removing the kettle from the fire, stirring the sugar well in, and bottling immediately. The fruit is a bright color, and keeps for years." Thanks for the information. We hope it may answer the needs of our former questioner.

SUSQUEHANNA, (Danville, Ark.,) asks: 1st. "Do you know of any preparation or medicine that you can recommend as being good for the piles? I have been a sufferer for many years, and the doctors here cannot give me any relief. If you know of any, please tell me where, and at what price it can be procured. 2d. Do you know whether the company of the —— is responsible or not?" 1st. It is against our general rule to recommend any proprietary medicines. We have heard one preparation highly recommended by persons who profess to have been cured by its use. It is called Fish's Ointment, and can be procured for you, we presume, by any druggist. We should advise you to avoid all pies, sweet cakes, and fresh, soft bread. Eat plenty of fruit—and eat as little as you can for awhile. Try this plan for a month. 3d. We know nothing concerning the company you mention.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]